



L I T E R A R Y *cavalcade*

A MONTHLY FOR ENGLISH CLASSES PUBLISHED BY SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES



High, Wide and Handsome • A Lithograph by Fletcher Martin

JANUARY, 1981 • VOLUME 3 • NUMBER 4

LITERARY CAVALCADE, a Magazine for High School English Classes Published Monthly During the School Year. One of the SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES.


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Lesson Plans Topics for Discussion Activities Vocabulary Reading Lists

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Topics for Discussion

1. "Choice of Target" (p. 4)

What was Byrd Higby's dream for his son and his grandson? How did he experience his first frustration? Describe the plans that Byrd and Glenna make for Little Hig's arrival. Do these help to reveal the character and intentions of the grandparents? Explain. What incident raises the first small barrier between the boy and the old people? Why? What traits of Little Hig does his grandfather disapprove of? Why? Does Hig try to be cooperative? Explain. Who acts as peace-maker between the boy and his grandfather? How? Comment on Glenna's analysis of Byrd: "... his pride [is] what he lives by." How is the conflict between grandfather and grandson resolved? Does either score a complete victory? Explain.

2. "The Future Is Now" (p. 11)

Katherine Anne Porter was born in 1894 and is, therefore, more or less of your parents' generation. What lesson does she learn from the young man in the apartment opposite? What does she consider the dominant emotion of our times? Is it the death of others that affects us most deeply? Explain. How can Miss Porter's philosophy help you—and the other members of your generation—to meet the present challenge creatively and courageously? Be specific.

3. "The Long Fall" (p. 19)

What sort of man is Bill Morgan? Do he and Byrd Higby have something in common? Explain. Describe Bill's relationship with his son. Is Charlie's fear of high places a sign of weakness in itself? Explain. How does the older Morgan handle the situation? Do you approve of his methods? Why or why

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a. This short short story is an example of the popular and effective literary type known as the *monologue* (one-sided "conversation," addressed by one person to another; the second person's presence is felt throughout, although he never speaks). To see how two other great writers have handled this type, read and report on either of the following: (1) Robert Browning's "Andrea del Sarto," "Fra Lippo Lippi," "My Last Duchess," "The Bishop Orders His Tomb"; (2) Ring Lardner's "Alibi Ike" and "Haircut."

b. Write a short story or a poem in monologue form.

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poem in this style. Read *Other Poems*, *The Buck in the Snow*, *Conversation at Midnight*.

b. Write a sonnet on a simple, traditional lyric theme. Examples: love, death, nature, war. Use the Italian rhyme scheme, as Miss Millay has done, or the English (abab, cdcd, efef, gg).

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Read and report on Kipling's novel, *Kim*. It will help you to understand and evaluate the movie when it comes to your favorite theater.

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a. Build a short short story around some key object (like the cup of coffee in Mary Lockwood's story). Suggestions: a class ring, a sports letter, a faded corsage, an interesting stamp from your collection.

b. Write a familiar essay about the happiest New Year's Day of your life. If you've ever spent New Year's abroad, describe the New Year's customs in the country you visited.

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• A HAPPIER NEW YEAR WITH CAVALCADE

You're starting the New Year right with the last issue of *Literary Cavalcade* for this semester. Because of high production costs, we cannot send the February issue until we receive your renewal for the second semester. Perhaps you have already sent yours, or your order is on a school-year basis. In either case, all is set for a happier New Year for you and your students.

To renew for the second semester, please use the order card sent you by first class mail, or write: Subscription Department, *Literary Cavalcade*, 7 East 12th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

Give us the name of one of your colleagues in the English Department and we'll be happy to send him or her a complimentary copy of *Literary Cavalcade*, with a friendly letter of introduction.

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One-Period Lesson Plan

Between Two Generations

Aim

To show pupils that there are natural differences between the standards of one generation and those of another—but the young can still learn from the “old” and *vice versa*!

Motivation

Do you often have trouble getting a parent, grandparent, or another older person to see your side of an issue? What was your toughest “battle”? How did it turn out?

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not? How does Charlie restore his father’s faith in him? In your opinion did this conflict between two generations *have* to end in tragedy? Suggest a happier and healthier solution to the problem.

4. “Pivot Man” (p. 24)

On what issue do Vard Ransom and Cappy, the coach, disagree? Each eventually proves his maturity by meeting the other half way. What are the steps that lead to a mutual understanding? Be specific. Is the solution to the problem an easy one? Explain.

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b. Did an older member of your family plan a future for you to which you felt unsuited? Build an essay or a

short story around the problem—and its solution.

c. Have you ever been hunting? If so, read Robert P. Tristram Coffin’s poem, “Forgive My Guilt,” *Literary Cavalcade*, October, 1950, p. 12, and the letter by George Ralph in the “Letter Contest” of the Nov. 1950, issue. Then write a 500-word essay telling how you felt when you bagged your first game.

4. Poetry (p. 10)

a. Write your next non-fiction book report on a volume of Edna St. Vincent Millay’s poetry. Suggestions: *Renascent and Other Poems*, *A Few Figs from Thistles*, *The Harp-Weaver and Other Poems*, *The Buck in the Snow*, *Conversation at Midnight*.

b. Write a sonnet on a simple, traditional lyric theme. Examples: love, death, nature, war. Use the Italian rhyme scheme, as Miss Millay has done, or the English (abab, cdcd, efef, gg).

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school assembly, a big game. Include both comic and serious shots. The results will be displayed on the classroom (or school office) bulletin board.

9. "The Long Fall" (p. 18)

a. Get several classmates to join you in presenting this play as an assembly program.

b. Write a one-act play with a central conflict between (1) a person and his environment, (2) two persons, or (3) two sides of the same person. (Note to teacher: The three best plays could be chosen by vote of the class and become an informal drama-workshop project with student cast, director, stage crew, costume designer, etc. If the project really shapes up, it might be further developed into an original drama festival to be presented in the spring before the whole school.)

10. "Pivot Man" (p. 24)

a. Write your own sports story with the following ingredients: (a) a hero who's too big for his boots, (b) a coach who tries to understand, (c) a gradual chastening of the hero, (d) an escape in which the innocent hero is implicated, (e) a suspension from the team, (f) an unlooked-for revelation that restores the hero to the team in the last few minutes of play, (g) a smashing personal victory for the hero.

b. Write your next book report (fiction) on the complete novel, *Pivot Man*. It's a Scholastic Teen Age Book Club selection for February, 1951, and available to high-school pupils in this convenient pocket-book form.

VOCABULARY EXERCISES

On the paper you've just been given, number from 1 to 22. I'm going to read each of the following sentences slowly, stressing the key word. Next I shall read three possible definitions of the word. Only one definition is correct. Write opposite the appropriate number on your paper the letter of the correct definition. When you've finished, exchange papers with a student near you, and we'll check the correct answers. Finally you'll be allowed fifteen minutes to discuss these words and use them in original sentences.

(Note to teacher: Your key to the correct definition is the page and column reference in *Literary Cavalcade* where the word appears.)

- "Boys," the scoutmaster said, "start looking around for *tinder*."
a. marks of a fresh trail
b. something inflammable for kindling fire from a spark (p. 2-3)
c. Wild berries of the raspberry family
- Mr. Caswell, who coaches debating,

is forever telling us to speak *succinctly*.

- concisely (p. 3-1)
- from the diaphragm
- in modulated tones

- Before taking off for his country chateau, the Duke left orders for his old enemy to be *dispatched*.

- pardoned
- imprisoned
- put to death (p. 3-1)

- According to the *Daily Ledger*, the robbery was *perpetrated* an hour ago.

- solved
- committed (p. 3-1)
- thwarted

- The fight started when Binky's gang accused us of invading their *purlieu*.

- haunt or resort (p. 3-1)
- abandoned warehouse
- cellar

- I discovered a secret door in the old house by the simple process of *perambulation*.

- deduction
- walking about (p. 3-1)
- trial and error

- After ten years of court action, his property and titles were *remitted*.

- taken away
- held in trust for his heir
- restored (p. 3-1)

- On Monday, Harrison called me into his office and announced that my gossip columns would be *syndicated*.

- sold to another publisher
- published simultaneously in a number of newspapers (p. 3—"About the Author")
- collected and published in book form

- Sometimes *pretentious* people are just covering up for an inferiority complex.

- showy (p. 3—"About the Author")
- boastful
- aggressive

- Men often claim that *consistency* is a virtue that women lack.

- a. ability to reason logically
- b. firmness of purpose or character (p. 6-3)
- c. thrift

- According to Mother and Dad, I'm *indiscriminate* in my choice of friends.

- unselective (p. 10-1)
- b. snobbish
- c. calculating

- Herb obliged with a *poignant* little ditty about a poor girl's struggle to win a pardon for her convict sweetheart.

- falsely sentimental
- b. bitter
- c. touching (p. 10-2)

- One critic claimed that the *libretto*

of the opera should be tightened and brought up to date.

- words (p. 10-2)
- music
- stage directions

- In an *ironic* little curtain speech, she thanked the director of her first play for firing her, and thus opening the way to her present success.

- forgiving
- lightly sarcastic (p. 13-1)
- c. gracious

- The principal soon found out that it was Chuck who had *instigated* the riot.

- organized
- provoked (p. 13-1)
- c. quelled

- When he told me the story of his life, I began to understand the reasons for his *cynicism*.

- buoyancy
- b. persistence
- c. belief that human conduct is motivated by self-interest (p. 14-3)

- Fran confided that her new boyfriend was the *impetuous* type—he called ten times one week and ignored her the next.

- impulsive (p. 14-3)
- b. selfish
- c. absent-minded

- "I have just what the little man wants," said the salesman, producing a pair of Hopalong Cassidy boots with *perforated* toes.

- painted
- b. square
- c. pierced with holes (p. 18-1)

- It might have been the telephone connection, but Aunt Harriet's tone increased my *apprehension*.

- bewilderment
- b. fear of future evil (p. 18-1)
- c. hysteria

- "I won't have you borrowing my dress shirt for every high-school shindig," Father announced *vehemently*.

- forcefully (p. 18-2)
- b. irritably
- c. hatefully

- I sought the answer to our predicament in the guide's *impassive* face.

- expressive
- b. weather-beaten
- c. emotionless (p. 20-2)

- When questioned by the detective, the suspect decided it would be best to *temporize*.

- talk evasively (p. 22-1)
- b. make a break for it
- c. tell the whole truth

Answers to "What Do You Remember?"

Chains: a-4, b-1, c-5, d-7, e-2, f-6.

Choice of Target: a-3, b-2, c-3, d-2, e-1. The Long Fall: 2, 3, and 8.



Time: 1731. Place: An English seaport town.
A salty old character is eager to sell the captain
some chains; then he discovers what his customer
wants them for—a story you'll never forget.

CHAINS

By NIGEL KNEALE

CHAINS, master?

You've found the right man if it's them you're wanting. I lay, you'd travel from here to Old Scratch's bosom and never light on another stock like mine. You're in a sweat, master; due out on the next tide and short of tackle, I wager? Pretty fix, that. But you came to me, and I never let a sailor-man down yet.

Here—I'll just set a spark to me lantern; it's a filthy night round the harbor for an old man. Crabber, you brute—hup! Old dog, too, sir; we're both stiff in every joint. Now we'll be off!

Only a few steps away, my shed is. My palace. Thirty feet to the ceiling, if it's a pygmy's inch. Heaped with the treasures of the deep blue sea.

Of course, you understand my stores aren't new, exactly. Honorable labor, you might say, has been their lot. So often a firkin-bellied shipowner, or it might be a wharf-lubber, or just a poxy carter, they'll say: "These here chains is wore out," and they'll throw them away. But do you—heel, Crabber!—do you just chip off the pitch and rust, and run 'em through a tub of rock-oil, why, many a one'll see good service again. Test 'em and take out the weak links, that's all.

Of course, they comes cheaper than the new, master; but you'll find 'em well cared for, and I sell only the best. Big demand for 'em sometimes, so I like the sight of moneys in hand, of course—oh, yes, sir; yes, I see. Naturally I knew I could trust you. Nice to deal with a gentleman, sir.

It's remarkable, you know, what kinds and degrees there is in chains. Rare masterpieces, sometimes. Craft and wisdom I've found in some of mine, that no ordinary ironman would ever know of, even in this year of grace 1731. The

way they'll take any sort of strain, yet when they're slack they'll lie neat as a lady's hand. Queer-shaped foreign links you see, you'd think they had human sinews the way they act. Course they're not all like that; some are clumsy, sheer weight, and treacherous in a ship.

And here we are, master. Big place, eh? Would you hold the lantern just a moment; salt gets into the lock and it sticks. That's it—thank you kindly. Just follow me.

Now watch when I hold up the lamp. There! Chains enough for you, eh? See how they go right up to the very roof? Looped and coiled over the crossbeams, most of 'em. Mark where you walk, there's that many on the floor; it's slippery, too, from the oil that drips down.

Quite an inheritance, eh, master?

That's what it was, you know. My grandfather had it first, and then my father. When I came back from the sea—oh, yes, I sailed in southern waters for many a year—my father said: "You've had a hard life, Samuel," he said. "With my blessing, do you take this store which has been built up to a paying business by me and my father." Meaning grandfather, you see. I told him he was a liar. He was right, though. Remarkable what money there is in them, too; gentry wanting a rare piece of chain for some fancy purpose, and what not.

Here's me chattering and you got to sail on the next tide!

Now, master, just what's your requirements? Spare anchor chain? Some fine lengths here, full weight. See that in the corner? Washed up out of a Dutchman in van Tromp's time; too old to use now, though.

Something lighter?—right! This way, sir.

Mark that dog—after a rat, just as if he isn't past catching them! Fetch, Crabber! His wits are gone; what would rats live on in a place like—?

Hsst! Listen to that, master? Hear it? A tiny slithering, metal sound, and then a soft plop. That'd be what the dog heard, and it isn't a rat. Guess what it is?

It's the chain, master. A little chain. Sliding and slithering through the heavier lengths and down to the floor. They'll hang here quiet, month after month, and then—it's the way heat and cold work on them, or a gust of wind through a crack—they'll shift just enough, and come wriggling down like iron snakes. Queer, eh? Opening the door must have set that joey off.

Mind that patch of grease, master!

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Although he is only 29, Nigel Kneale last year won both the Atlantic Award and the Somerset Maugham Award for his short stories. Kneale is a native of the Isle of Man, a comparatively remote outpost in the middle of the Irish Sea, and many of his stories are infused with the flavor of this region. A number of his best stories have just been published in this country in a volume entitled *Tomato Cain and Other Stories*.



With the light so dim, you need to watch where you put your feet.

Yes, sometimes I'll be in my cottage yonder, and in the middle of the night there'll be hell's own crashing and whipping from this shed. And next morning I'll find chains lying tangled all about, like those huge dead devilsnakes that floats and stinks on the Sargasso; I lay you seen them. So I have to set to, and drag 'em out in order again.

Now, master, would these be more to your liking? Not too heavy, but there's a deal of life in 'em yet. Stand on a length and pull hard as you like—you'll find no weak links.

Would that be your ship lying across the bay now, master—the *Lampedusa*? Sailing for the Ivory Coast, they say; would that be right? Pick up cargo there for the Americas?

SO the chains you'd be wanting wouldn't be ordinary ones. Eh?

But about three feet long, with a stout ring at one end, and shackles at the other; such that'll hold a man secure. Well, master, I reckon I can help you there. Just a bit farther along, if you please. Not that I've had many asking for them—they want new ones because they're scared of the blackbirds breaking loose!

Now watch your step! If you slip and clutch at 'em, there's no telling what they'll do. Crush a man's head like a barnacle if they come down sudden.

Look, over in that corner yonder—them's the ones you want. I had 'em strung up along that wall out of the way. Most of 'em seen service in slavers before, and half a hundred from—guess where—old Newgate Gaol. You might find some of the gyves rusted on the inside by sweat and stuff; but on the whole, they're fair condition.

Queer, come to think of it; how much power there is in this place. Just waiting. All these chains here are made for holding and binding ships, and men.

Eh, master? So they'll do what they're told, and work hard till they're done with. That's right, ain't it? Eh? Eh? Oh, you're one as appreciates a cunning bit of chain. "A real sailor-man," says I when I seen you first. And there's good money for blackbirds now in Virginia.

Now, how's them, master? Strong, ain't they? Take more than a savage to work his way out of them fetters; and just feel 'em! Funny how they eat into the skin, and when the raw salt of a ship gets at the sores—

Forgive me chattering.

You'll take 'em all? All them with fetters and anklets. I'll have 'em down directly then, and maybe some of your crew would be along in a few minutes to collect 'em. I'll just light you back to the door, sir.

No, no, this is the way we came. Watch your head. Just place your feet where I do, master, and you'll dodge the slippery patches. Glad I've been able to help you out; I often—

Oh! That's a fine thing—telling you to be careful, and—tumbling myself like that. Don't move, sir. Just stand dead still a moment while I—re-light the lantern. Don't move an inch now.

Hallo!

Something's slipping up aloft! Listen! They're on the move, all of them! Don't budge, whatever you do!

Oh—! Master—!

Lord, that was a smash! Curse this damp tinder—can't see a thing!

There! A bit of light at last! All right, Crabber? Good dog! Now where is he? Somewhere back here. Fetch him out, Crabber! Oh, what a monstrous mess of chain!

Heel, you brute!

Yes. That's his hand, with the dirty lace at the cuff. Might be—might be twenty fathoms of anchor chain there, lying on him; must have grabbed at a piece because he felt himself slipping in the dark. Poor simple, honest blackbird, he just didn't know his way about here. Was that it, dog? Maybe if you could see in the darkness like a cat, you'd think different.

Look, here's his fancy purse. His fancy gentleman's purse. Take a good sniff at that, dog. Don't mean a thing to you, eh?

Poor man, how he screamed! A sound I never did like to hear from a man.

Eh, well, master. So you've died. And spoiled my chance to tell you about my merry life; you'd have listened kindly to it, being as you're a sailor-man. How I sweated in the shipyards before I ran off to sea. And how the yellow jack took me, and I came through it. And how—and how, for instance, I was seven years aboard the Spaniard galley. In chains.

Crabber! Come away, you filthy brute!

A noted radio critic tangles with a "beefcake" champ

Mature's Greatest Fight

By JOHN CROSBY



CECIL B. DE MILLE'S great movie excess, *Samson and Delilah*, which John Steinbeck reviewed succinctly in a single line ("Saw the movie. Loved the book"), contains one episode which has already attracted considerable well-merited attention. That's the one where Victor Mature leaps out of a chariot in pursuit of a lion.

"You forgot your spear," Hedy Lamarr shouts at him.

"It's only a young lion," replies Mr. Mature, and forthwith dispatches it.

To you younger fight fans and even to some of you older ones who haven't followed Mr. Mature's fighting career, this bit may smell faintly incredible. The veterans among us who have watched the boy since his early days knew it was no contest to start out with. The lion never should have been matched against Mature. You wouldn't throw Willie Pep against Lee Savold, would you?

Me, I've been following Mature since way back when he was acting—well, appearing then, in the film *1,000,000 B.C.*, which was loudly acclaimed on its first run as the worst motion picture ever made, anytime, anywhere. I consider that claim sweeping. There have been a great many motion pictures perpetrated since Thomas Alva Edison committed the error of inventing that terrible machine. I think it rash to elevate any single picture to such high honor. One of the ten worst, maybe. Not necessarily the worst.

Normally, pictures don't fall into my purlieu. (If you don't know what a purlieu is, you ought to be reading somebody else. A purlieu, as anyone can easily discover by a trip to the dictionary, is afforested land, severed from the royal forest by perambulation, and disafforested so as to remit to the for-

mer owners their rights, subject to certain forest laws and restrictions. Let's press forward, men.)

I repeat. Normally, pictures don't fall into my purlieu. They fall, by perambulation, into the purlieu of the movie critics. However, there is a statute of limitations on these things. When a picture gets on television, the movie critics wash their hands of it. As far as *1,000,000 B.C.* is concerned, the movie critics washed their hands of it the day it appeared, some of them washing their hands uninterruptedly for four days running. And anyhow, *1,000,000 B.C.*, along with the other nine worst pictures ever made, is now on television, where, if you're sufficiently agile, you may catch the early fighting Mature. (If you want to refer to him as the immature Mature, go right ahead. But leave me out of it.)

He had three fights in this picture, all of them, if you're a student of the game, interesting. The first was with a saber-toothed buffalo, weighing in at 1,200 pounds. It was a great fight. The two of them, Mature and the buffalo, disafforested about half an acre of timber before Mature, in the first minute of the second round, severed the beast

permanently from the royal forest.

You could tell the kid was green. He wouldn't keep his left up and his footwork was slow and uncertain. But he was game, aggressive and willing to learn. Trouble with the first fight was it made the kid cocky. He insisted next on a match with an elephant, weighing in at twelve tons and clearly out of his class. In the first ten seconds of the fight, the elephant pitched him 1,000 feet—straight down—into a river. The late Carole Landis had to wade out and rescue him.

That contest sobered him. He buckled down to serious work. His next time out he was matched—there were some pessimists who claimed he was overmatched—against a dinosaur. It was a fight that still brings a faraway look to the eyes of those few oldtimers who saw it. Outweighed, outreached, outclassed, Mature stayed in there punching, wore the beast down in the eighth, and kayoed him in the tenth.

If Miss Lamarr had seen that battle, she never would have made that silly remark about the spear. She'd have shouted instead: "You come back here, you big bully, and leave that poor little lion alone."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Crosby, who writes one of the wittiest and most widely syndicated radio and television columns, was born in Milwaukee, Wis. After being graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy and Yale University, he returned to his home town as a reporter for one of the local papers. In 1935 he went to work for the *New York Herald Tribune* where in addition to routine assignments, he occasionally was given a chance to cover various aspects of the amusement industry. His lively style in handling such stories eventually prompted the *Trib* to assign him to a regular radio column. In writing about the air waves, Crosby pulls no punches and is quick to satirize dull or pretentious entertainment. His columns are frequently so amusing that many readers who rarely listen to the radio read his reviews regularly. Crosby is currently working on a novel.



Hig was a good shot, but his grandfather was ashamed of him when they went hunting . . . until he learned the boy's secret

CHOICE

BYRD HIGBY, like his father before him, was a hunter, a man so sensitive to the traits of wild game that people said he must be part fox, although it was enough just to be a Higby. He had prowled the hills until he knew every den, every rock and path and hollow. He knew, as if by instinct, just where to turn his hounds loose and where to wait for them, and his gray eyes had taken on the cunning narrowness of an animal that moves by night, with stealth.

"It's something in the Higby blood," people said, and they envied Byrd and Glenna because they lived in comfort, without fear of ever wanting for anything. Glenna wore town dresses and had a piano in the parlor. Byrd, with Bill Baldrige working his land for shares, was free to hunt all night, sleep all day. When he sat in his porch swing cleaning one of his shotguns or counting the money he'd made on hides, he seemed to be a man without a care. Only Glenna knew the pain Byrd lived with, a worrisome longing which had chewed him raw.

"She could send him for summers," Byrd would grumble, his brown hands

clenched against the knowledge that his grandson was growing up on city streets, where, he had heard, squirrels played like barn kittens and it was against the law to shoot them.

"It ain't for us to tell her what's right," Glenna always said.

"Just summers, that ain't much to ask, so's I can learn him to hunt."

The Higbys had had only one child, a son who might, in time, have become even more famous as a hunter than his father, but Little Byrd had been killed in an automobile accident the year after he'd married the prettiest of the Sayre girls, Mary Frances. For weeks after the accident Byrd hadn't left the house.

He'd let his hounds grow fat with kitchen eating, let his guns rust and the foxes take his setting hens. He'd come bouncing back to life only when Glenna had told him Mary Fran was going to have a baby. He'd scared the foxes back to their dens, run the fat off his hounds, and sent the rabbits, skunks, possum, coons, and mink scurrying into the shelter of the national park, where it was forbidden to hunt. For months, until Mary Fran's time had come, he'd lived between insupportable extremes of delight and despair, between the

dream of hunting with Little Byrd and the nightmare of having the baby turn out to be a girl.

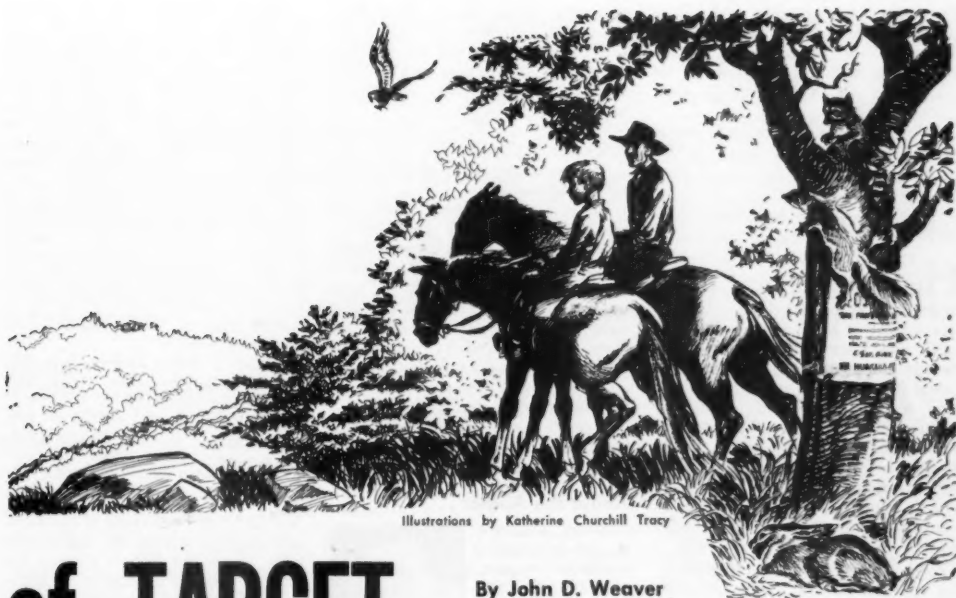
"No," he said, the more he thought about it being a girl, "the Lord wouldn't do me such a trick."

It nettled him that Mary Fran should name the baby Myron, after her father, who couldn't tell a fox from a beagle, but, as Byrd had explained to Glenna at the time, "At least she can't take the Higby off'n his name." Little Hig-Byrd never used the name Myron—was just learning to walk and Byrd was trying to teach him duck calls when Mary Fran moved to Washington, and from there to California. Byrd, for two years, had kept the baby bed in the child's room, and after it had been carried out to the barn, he had fretted through ten winters with the ragged hope that surely this summer Mary Fran would send Little Hig back to them, but she never had. She sent snapshots, and the boy dutifully wrote his grandparents after every birthday and Christmas present.

"I got straight A's again," he'd write, or, "I'm going out for track."

"He's getting a good schooling," Glenna would say. "He'll maybe turn out a lawyer."

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Illustrations by Katherine Churchill Tracy

of TARGET

By John D. Weaver

Byrd would bleat with pain, and next morning he'd miss the first couple of squirrels. Because of pride or shame, he never showed his loneliness outside the house. He grumbled a good deal, but mostly about the government, which had, he felt, ruined his land by taking the adjacent hills into its national park, where wild life was safe from guns and hounds. "All the game's left to live on gov'mint land," Byrd complained, and it was true that game was so thick in the park a man couldn't walk through it without stepping over ground hogs too fat to move out of the way. Sometimes, just to bring pain on himself, he would saddle his horse and ride into the park, listening to the foxes bark their insults, watching the coons grin at him.

"A man pays taxes all his life," he'd say when he got back to Cassville, "and this is what the gov'mint does to him."

He fell to brooding about the government, grew indifferent to hunting, and sometimes went a week without taking his dogs out. Flute Figgins skinned him on a hound trade, and foxes began to come to the henhouses in the daytime. People shook their heads and said old Byrd was finally feeling his age, but in April, when Mary Fran wrote that she

was moving to a new job in Texas and it would be a considerable favor if they'd keep Myron for the summer, Byrd leaped up and went roaring into the hills with his hounds. Men who heard him cussing the dogs said it was a kind of music to hear, because of the wild laughing behind it. The foxes, darting back to the park, cut red streaks of terror through the green thickets, and people realized how much Byrd had missed the boy all these years.

"It's another month yet 'fore he comes," Glenna kept saying as Byrd scurried about the house, fussing because she hadn't made the boy's bed or finished the new curtains for his room. He picked over his guns, deciding to start Little Hig with a sixteen-gauge double-barrel. "I'd rather have a twelve-gauge myself," he'd say, "but the sixteen don't kick." He worked out with his dogs every day, and sometimes in the middle of the night he'd wake Glenna up. "Maybe I'd best break him in with a twenty-two," he'd say, or, "The almanac says we're gonna have a rainy summer. Squirrel weather."

Glenna painted the boy's room, bought a little radio to put by his bed. Byrd got him a pony.

"He'll need hunting clothes," Byrd

said one night, and was about to order two catalogue pages of shirts and jackets when Glenna reminded him they didn't know the boy's size.

"We'll get 'em in town," Glenna said, but Byrd didn't hear her. He'd trotted upstairs to put new springs in Little Hig's bed.

"He'll be used to sleeping soft," he said, and later he woke Glenna up to tell her he'd decided to have the car painted, so Little Hig would have no cause to feel ashamed of them. Glenna bought two cotton dresses in town and Byrd got a new suit and a new leather jacket.

The night before the boy was to come from Washington by bus, Byrd was pacing restlessly around the parlor, sure they'd overlooked something. "Soap!" he suddenly shouted, because Little Hig would naturally want city soap.

"I got some," Glenna said. "Green."

"It smell good?"

She nodded and Byrd went to frowning and pacing again. "He maybe eats differently than us," he said. "City things."

"Meat's meat."

"Mary Fran should of wrote us what to feed him," Byrd began to cuss. That made him feel better.

He was up before dawn, washing, shaving and slicking down his hair.

He put on a white shirt and a blue string tie. He wore his new suit and low-cut black shoes. When Glenna called him in to his breakfast, he sat picking at his food, worrying about missing the bus.

"We got nearly four hours," Glenna said.

"It might come early."

"It never comes early."

"They're contrary things, them busses."

HE almost got in a fight with the ticket man at the bus depot. "A man's got a right to ask is the bus late," he said, and Glenna took him outside, bought him a bottle of grape pop. "You asked him once too many times," she said. She glanced uneasily around the waiting platform above the driveway, eyeing the town women whose dresses had come from the same store as hers, but somehow looked different, more stylish. She was conscious of the weathered roughness of her skin, the color of an old hoe handle. Byrd, with a clumsy tenderness, patted her arm.

"We'll get along good," he said. "Hig and us."

They stood to one side of the town people as the red and yellow bus lumbered up to the platform. The bus door swung open and rumpled people with tired eyes spilled out, moving with a cramped stiffness. Byrd began to twitch and crane, frowning because he didn't see Little Hig.

"They've lost him," he said, and started cursing the bus people, but then Little Hig came to the door, carrying a small canvas duffel bag, and even without the pictures Mary Fran had sent there was no mistaking the gray eyes and the thin, pointed nose, Higby features. He might, they both felt, be Little Byrd, except for the city clothes and something in his manner. Byrd shouted to him, and Glenna waved. The boy smiled, nodded, and stepped down, threading easily through the hedge of people, without the defensive feeling of difference which his father would have had in a town crowd. Byrd and Glenna pressed against the red brick wall, waiting.

"Hello, Gran." The boy dropped his bag, stood on tiptoe to kiss Glenna. Byrd felt the sweat ooze through his new shirt. It's gonna be all right, he told himself.

Little Hig, all the way out from town, sat between Byrd and Glenna, answering and asking questions. He said no, he wasn't tired, and he asked if there was any place to swim—he liked swimming. "We got a whole creek," Byrd

said, and Glenna asked about Mary Fran. "Mother's fine." He had a city way of talking. He was wearing long pants and a checked coat, and his shoes, Byrd noticed, didn't have any strings, just slipped on somehow.

"We don't live fancy," Glenna said. "It's country, you know."

"But we've got plenty of what we've got," Byrd said.

The car moved slowly uphill, past pine clumps and small yellow houses, past rail fences, cornfields, and apple orchards. Little Hig was taking everything in, but it was hard to tell what he was thinking. They came within sight of old man Henry Haskin's log hovel, where the windows were covered with cardboard and plaster chinks lay on the ground like dirty snow. Little Hig turned to stare back at it.

"I 'spect it was a mighty long trip," Glenna said, to draw him away.

About the Author . . .

At 38, John D. Weaver is securely established as one of America's top short-story writers. His stories have appeared in *Harper's*, the *American*, *Esquire*, *Collier's*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*. Mr. Weaver is a product of the public schools of Washington, D. C., where he was born. He has an A.B. from William and Mary College and an A.M. from George Washington University. Postgraduate activities include two years with a government agency, four years on the staff of the *Kansas City Star*, and three years with the Army. He has also written a novel, *Wind Before Rain*, and a play, *Virginia Reel*, on which he collaborated with his wife. His story, "Bread and Games," which also had its setting in the Virginia hills, was published in the February, 1949, issue of *Literary Cavalcade*.



"Oh, no. Not by plane."

Byrd and Glenna tightened. They had both taken it for granted the boy would get on a bus in California and ride it straight across the country into Roynton.

"Mother didn't tell you I was flying," Little Hig said, smiling like a grownup who'd been teased out of a secret by children. "She was afraid you'd worry."

"I wouldn't of slept," Glenna said.

"But, Gren, once you tried it—"

"I wouldn't ever try it."

They laughed nervously, and it was another wedge between them.

Bill Baldridge was waiting for them in front of the house, with the pony saddled and bridled. Little Hig gasped, a sudden shine in his eyes. Glenna opened the car door, and he scrambled out, hurrying across the yard. When he came near the pony, he slowed down, held out his hand, and, for the first time, seemed unsure of himself. Byrd settled back in the car, with his fox grin. He felt that with the pony, which had been his idea, he'd got ahead of the boy.

"He's a nice lil' fellow," Glenna said, trying to shake off the frightening picture of the airship.

Byrd frowned. "He's mounting from the wrong side."

"What's it matter, long's he gets on?"

"It's like anything else, a right way and a wrong way."

"But I don't see—"

"I've always made it a point to do things right."

GLENN, by the end of the week, had stopped setting the dining-room table, except for Sunday dinner. The three of them ate together in the kitchen, like family, and after each meal Little Hig helped with the dishes while Byrd picked and sucked his teeth. The boy made his own bed every morning, and Glenna told Byrd she'd always thought that was something nobody could train a Higby to do. Byrd was surprised and pained. "But I ain't company," he said, and wondered what had ever come over Glenna to act so contrary. He blamed it on the government.

"The Democrats have always stood for freethinking," he said, the park having long ago turned him Republican.

Little Hig's face filled out and turned pink from the sun, then red, and finally a rich walnut brown. His blue denim shirt and his overall pants gradually lost their shiny newness, and he got so he could sit down of an evening after riding the pony all afternoon. Byrd started him on the twenty-two, taught him how to clean and care for the rifle, how to carry it, how to draw a bead quickly. He set up a target back of the barn and ran through three boxes of cartridges before the boy began to hit the bull's-eye with any consistency.

"He's got the Higby eye," Byrd said, showing the punctured bull's-eye all around Cassville.

In the afternoon Little Hig would saddle his pony and ride with Byrd through the hills. Usually they'd strike out through the park, so Byrd could point out wild game growing hog-fat with government living. Byrd showed the boy a hollow hidden behind a steep

cliff where coons lived as though it were a hotel. "If a man was to crawl up that cliff," Byrd said, "and then was to fall on the other side, he'd squash a dozen coons. They're that thick in there." Nothing upset Byrd so much as seeing a coon grinning down at him from a tree crotch. "They don't even run from me," he said. "It ain't natural," and he claimed the government was trying to change the order of nature.

At night Byrd and Little Hig would walk the hills with the hounds, and Byrd would test the sharpness of the boy's ear. "Which way the dogs running now?" he'd ask, or, "Where'd they lose the scent?" Little Hig learned quickly, and when Glenna complained that Byrd was trying to cram more into the boy's head than it could hold, Byrd just laughed. "My head holds it," he said, and went around telling everybody the boy was a natural hunter.

Little Hig, of course, made mistakes. He overfed his pony. He gave the cats so many kitchen scraps they began to lie in the sun and let the field mice have free run of the house. Worst of all, he played with the foxhounds as though they were house pets. "It's a sure way to spoil a good dog," Byrd told the boy, and Glenna got him a mongrel pup, the first Higby dog that had done nothing but eat and sleep and wag its tail.

"I never seen such a useless thing as that," Byrd said, and it hurt him to watch the boy waste his time teaching the dog to roll over dead and sit up and beg.

"Mary Fran's raised him friendly," Glenna said. "Like how he helps me with the dishes."

Byrd snorted. "It ain't like a Higby to keep a dog that takes from the table and don't add to it." He started out of the room, mumbling, then stopped abruptly and snapped, "And dishes is woman's work."

ONE Saturday afternoon, when Byrd felt the boy was ready, he said he thought he'd ride up to Cassville, and maybe Little Hig would like to go with him. The boy brought out his pony, and Byrd sent him back to the house for the twenty-two, "just in case we see a snake." They rode up to Gus Falk's store, hitched the horse and pony out front, then loafed in the porch shade with Flute Figgins, Bettem Curry and Link Taylor. The men were talking bass fishing. Little Hig sat on the end of the porch, sucking on a bottle of pop. Nobody paid any attention to him for a while, and then Flute Figgins

turned to him. "Well, son, can you outshoot the old man yet?" Little Hig grinned.

Byrd, as though he'd just remembered the rifle, lifted it from his lap and glanced around for a target. Flute picked up a bottle cap. Byrd nodded. Flute stood up, threw the bottle cap as high as he could and Byrd, without even getting up, sighted the rifle and fired. The bullet broke the clean arc of the cap's fall, sent it whizzing through the air.

"Here," Byrd said, and tossed the rifle to Little Hig.

Little Hig loaded the rifle, and Byrd said he'd best stand up, but the boy shook his head. Byrd, watching Flute, sensed what was going to happen. Flute intended to throw the cap at an angle, setting up an impossible shot. Byrd was right about Flute, but not about the shot. Little Hig hit the cap without seeming to try.

"The boy's learning," Byrd said quietly.

He waited for a good rain, because it was time now to take Little Hig out after squirrels. He fretted at the almanac, fidgeted while clouds drifted in and out of the valley. Little Hig would ride his pony down to the creek and go swimming, the mongrel pup sleeping on a rock in the sun until the boy had dressed and started home again. Byrd grew restless, irritable, complained of arthritis in his legs, and Glenna said he was working himself up to something, he didn't know what. "We're maybe having a drought," Byrd groaned, and that Sunday he stared right through the collection plate, not moving. Finally, on Wednesday, a rain came in the night, and Byrd nudged Glenna awake to listen to it.

"I knowed it was coming," Byrd said. "I lost faith in that almanac, but when my 'ritis says rain, it rains."

Shortly after sunup he and Little Hig struck out, the boy disappointed that they were walking instead of riding. "You take that pony up in the wood," Byrd said, "and you wouldn't find a squirrel showing for two miles around." They followed a footpath through a green hollow, rain dripping on them from low branches. Little Hig stepped in Byrd's bootprints, the two of them moving without a sound in the soft ground. Byrd looked back once, saw that the boy was taking care of his rifle, protecting the muzzle from the dripping leaves.

They came to the edge of a small clearing and Byrd stopped, motioning Little Hig to ease up alongside him. Byrd pointed to a blackheart cherry tree off to his right. Little Hig could

see one of the upper branches moving, and could hear the rustle of wet leaves. Byrd nodded to the boy.

Little Hig pressed the safety catch, lifted the rifle slowly. The squirrel was in plain sight now, a ball of gray fur hunched on the dark, glittering branch, with daylight behind him. It was, Byrd said afterward, as perfect a shot as a man was ever likely to get at a squirrel, waiting to see it drop. He heard the rifle go off, but the squirrel didn't fall. It scampered away.

"You shot over him," Byrd said, and later, when he got to studying back, he remembered the boy hadn't said anything.

IT was nearly half an hour before they got another shot, and this one came after Byrd had picked a good place to sit and wait. They were on a rock ledge, screened by brush, looking down on another cherry tree. A squirrel came toward the cherries, leaping from branch to branch. They could hear the rustle of his path, and then they saw the leaves shaking on one of the upper branches of the cherry tree. "Get him in the clear," Byrd whispered, and the boy sat with upraised rifle. The squirrel worked away from the leaves, paused for a moment full-length on the branch.

"I could of got him with a rock," Byrd told Glenna later, but the boy missed.

"I'm sorry," Little Hig said, and when Byrd offered him the shotgun, the boy shook his head. "I just can't kill one," Byrd frowned, still not understanding until the boy said again, "I just can't kill one."

Byrd sat for a moment, staring through the trees, then he pushed up from the ledge. "We'd best get on back to the house."

Glenna, from the garden, saw them coming, and her troubled glance darted from Little Hig, who seemed unhurt, to the empty gunny sack, and then to Byrd. She thought at first he'd been shot—he was limping badly—and then she saw it was just the hobble of a very old man.

She dropped her hoe, hurried toward them. "What's went wrong?"

Byrd walked past her, his body slumped, his face twisted with pain.

"It's my fault, Gran," Little Hig said.

Glenna nodded. "I was afraid you couldn't."

"I like the targets, that's fun, but—" "I know."

She told the boy to go for a ride on his pony, and then she went to the house. Byrd was sitting in his big chair,

his head in his hands, with the look of a man who has built his life around some one thing, then lost it.

"You like some coffee?" Glenna said, and he shook his head. "All I gotta do is hotten it up."

"Don't nag at me."

She warmed the coffee, brought him a cup, and he drank it. She took off his hunting boots. "It's a feeling some people have," she said. "I've had it myself."

"It's natural to kill things. They 'spect it of you."

"Nothing ever likes to get killed. I reckon if I stopped and give it a li'l thought, I'd have trouble even killing a chicken."

"The Lord never meant for a chicken to live like house company."

"You ain't being fair," she said.

"That's something I've always been. Fair."

"He don't necessarily *have* to be like you."

Byrd nodded, admitting in all fairness the difficulty of such a goal. "But," he said, "he oughta try."

Byrd, for the rest of the summer, would get up from the breakfast table and stalk out of the house with his gun and his favorite dog. He'd come home for dinner, then disappear again until supertime. "It's the same like I'd never had a grandbaby," he told Glenna. Little Hig would stay in his room, reading paper picture books, or he'd sit on the front porch with his mongrel pup, staring out over the valley, and when Glenna asked him why he didn't saddle up his pony, he'd say, "I don't feel like it." Then he'd see Byrd coming home with dead possum and he'd go off somewhere alone.

"I give him his chance," Byrd would say when Glenna fell to worrying.

WHILE Byrd was taking his ease on the porch after supper one evening, Link Taylor came by with about the biggest ground hog Byrd had ever seen. Byrd asked where he'd got it, and Link said he'd found it. Byrd grinned. "I reckon I know where," Link shrugged. "I tell you what's a fact, Byrd. Them guv-mint men got a nice warm place to set of an evening, and they ain't gonna go climbing through the hills looking for a man on accounta one old ground hog. It don't stand to reason."

Glenna and Little Hig were in the parlor, listening, and when Link had gone, Glenna marched out to the porch. "Now don't go getting any crazy-fool notions, Byrd Higby."

Byrd scratched his chin. "It's some sense in what Link says."

"I won't pay no fine for you," Glenna told him.

"Them coons been setting up there laughing at me for a mighty long time now."

Byrd got up, shuffled on back of the house toward the kennel. Glenna began to knot her handkerchief, tightening with the knowledge the government men were just waiting to get their hands on Byrd Higby, so they could make an example of him.

"They'd have a hard time catching him," Little Hig said, moving quietly out to the porch now that Byrd had gone.

"It'd be the death of him, not so much the fine as getting caught. It'd kill his pride and that's what he lives by."

Byrd waited for a three-quarter moon, enough light for him to do without a lantern, but not enough to be easily spotted. He sneaked out of the house while Glenna was sleeping, and headed for the little hollow back of the rock cliff, where the coons had set up their government boardinghouse. He carried a gun, a flashlight and two gunny sacks. The cup-shaped hollow was just below the ridge of the Hogback, and the only way a man could get into it was to climb the slippery, moss-splotted cliff.

"No guv'mint man's gonna try to get up to it," Byrd assured himself, "and even if he tried, he couldn't make it to the top."

Byrd kept well outside the park until he came to the base of the Hogback, and crossed into government land where the woods were thickest. The nearest park lookout post was over two miles away, and Byrd was warmed with the certainty that the government man, in his fine uniform and polished boots, would be sitting back in his chair, reading a magazine or listening to the radio.

A guv'mint man's like a coon or anything else, Byrd thought. All you gotta do is be smarter'n him.

He crept slowly up the hill. The woods were so thick, so matted with growth, he had to walk with his head turtled into his shoulders, and at times had to crawl on the ground. But the more he climbed and crawled, the more he wondered why he'd waited so long, especially when the coons really belonged to him. He'd paid for them with his tax money.

"A man's got a right to come get what belongs to him," he told himself as he stood staring up at the granite face of the cliff which separated him from the tax-fattened coons.

He slung his gun across his shoulders, and by working his feet into crevices and grabbing at tufts of weeds grow-

ing from cracks in the cliff, he managed to crawl about five feet from the ground, and then he fell. He started up a second time, and got almost halfway to the top before he slipped and tumbled back, cracking his knee and ripping his hunting pants. He cursed and studied the cliff, finally tackling it from a different point, with hands skinned raw and burning with pain.

He was clawing at a clump of damp moss on the ground above the cliff only inches from his goal, when his feet fell out from under him, and he came crashing down. His chin struck a granite bump on the face of the cliff, clamping his jaws shut against his tongue. He bellowed with pain, and lay on the ground, writhing and bleeding, helplessly pounding the earth with angry fists which were painful to clench. He thought he heard the coons in the hollow, laughing.

HE staggered toward the cliff, climbing more slowly, cautiously testing his footing, and avoiding treacherous growths which had betrayed him before. He wriggled up toward a sapling which grew near the rim of the cliff, and was strong enough to hold him if he could ever get his hands on it and pull himself up and over the rocky edge.

He climbed past previous pitfalls, his bruised and bleeding hands pawing the rock, fumbling for a grip, and with his breath almost gone, he slapped out into the darkness and felt the smooth sapling trunk. He strained higher, his fingers closing around the base of the trunk. He lay for a moment against the rock, panting, sweating, fired with hatred for the granite wall as though it were a living thing. Slowly, grunting, he pulled himself up and flopped like a fish over onto the ground which was blessedly soft and flat.

Ain't another man alive could of did it, he thought as he peered down into the dark hollow crawling with coons. He sat up, sliding the gun from his shoulders. He wiped the blood from his mouth. Then he gasped. A light had flashed from the depths of the hollow. He groaned. The light flashed a second time and began moving toward him. He twisted around, half climbed, half fell to the ground. He had run almost to the edge of the park before he realized he'd left his gun on top of the cliff. He stumbled past the park fence out onto free land. He felt for a soft place to lie down.

"He couldn't of got in there," he told himself, sick with the knowledge that by noon the story would be all over the hills, and there'd be no denying it.

The gun was proof. Fifty years of hunting, the like of which no one had ever seen or heard tell of, would be forgotten, and people would link Byrd Higby with one shameful thing, the time the government man outfoxed him.

It's what the guv'mint's been working up to the last twenty years, he thought, and, lying on the ground, with his life suddenly come to nothing, he was overwhelmed by the unfairness of it all, like the time his Cousin Jack got into trouble. Jack had worked hard all his life, raised four children, helped put up the Salvationist Church, and had never touched tobacco or alcohol, but during the war, when cars were running on the rims, the sheriff had caught Jack with two new tires. Nobody, not even Jack's kin, spoke to him now, because he'd served time.

"I'm gonna have Jack to dinner some Sunday," Byrd decided, and he realized it was likely true, as Jack had claimed, that he'd found the tires. . . .

The sky was lightening when Byrd came hobbling home, tiptoeing through the back door like a smokehouse thief. He crept softly upstairs, shucking off his shirt. He opened the bedroom door part way, saw that Glenna was still sleeping on her side of the bed. He undressed and lay down beside her, with the feeling that death would come as a great kindness.

"How come you to be so scratched?" Glenna said when she woke up.

"I don't feel so good."

"You been up to the park?"

"I took sick sudden in the night."

"They catch you?"

Byrd whimpered. "It's a terrible thing when a man can't be sick in his own bed."

Glenna flung on her housedress and stalked out of the room.

Forty years I've fed 'n' clothed her, Byrd thought, and this is the thanks I get.

HE crawled out of bed, figuring he might as well straighten things out with Glenna; she'd hear the story anyway, probably from Mrs. Mark Cass. He washed the dirt and dried blood from his face and hands, then put on fresh everyday clothes. He limped into the kitchen, where Glenna and Little Hig were fixing breakfast. He sat down at the head of the table:

"It don't come outta my house money," Glenna said.

"Huh?" He was staring at the white-washed wall above the door to the spring house. He blinked.

"Your fine. You can sell off a couple hounds and pay for it, but don't come wheeling at me."

His gun was hanging in its regular

place above the door, the stock waxed, the barrel oiled and shiny. He knew it couldn't be there, but it was.

"What's the matter?" Glenna, turning suddenly, had seen his face. He looked sick, really sick.

"Nothing."

"You wanta get back in the bed? I'll make you some milk toast."

"I feel some better now."

He began to blow his coffee, his eyes narrowing. Little Hig, he noticed, wasn't eating anything. He was just sitting there, with his hands hidden under the table. Byrd asked him to please pass the fried potatoes. Little Hig hesitated, then reached for the plate and Byrd saw fresh scabs dotting his knuckles. I knowed it, Byrd thought. No guv'mint man could of did it.

He leaned back, lighting his pipe. The boy, he realized, knew he'd head straight for the coon hollow, because they'd ridden up there together a dozen times, but how he'd managed to climb that cliff was something Byrd couldn't figure out, except he was younger. It took some knowing, Byrd thought, and he decided not to ask Cousin Jack to Sunday dinner. It would be a bad example to put before the boy, a common sneak thief.

"No," Glenna said when Little Hig started to help her with the dishes. "Not with your sore hands." She turned, smiling across the boy's head to Byrd, who got up quickly.

"I better go feed my dogs," he said.

Glenna sat down opposite Little Hig, listening to the sound of Byrd's footsteps. She knew him so well that just from the slow, thoughtful way of his walking, she could figure out what was taking shape in his mind. "He's telling himself he set a trap for you," she said, "just to see how you'd make out."

"If I'd left his gun up there, he wouldn't have known it was me."

Glenna shook her head. "No. It's best he knowed the straight of things, just once in his life." She laughed, struck by the contrary wonder of the man she'd lived with so many years. "Now I tell you what's the truth about him. In his thinking he's made himself something nobody could ever live up to, but I 'spect he comes closer'n most."

She sent Little Hig down to the kennel, where, she knew, Byrd would be waiting for him. The boy moved uneasily past the springhouse, the mongrel pup trotting at his heels. Byrd fed his hounds and then, swallowing hard, fed the mongrel. Afterward he and Little Hig rode up to Cassville and shot at bottle caps. Byrd outshot the boy, but, as he told Gus Falk, "He's coming to measure up to me."



A sonnet and an elegy

by America's late great lyric poet

Poems by

Edna St. Vincent Millay

**Time Does Not Bring Relief**

Time does not bring relief; you all have lied
 Who told me time would ease me of my pain!
 I miss him in the weeping of the rain;
 I want him in the shrinking of the tide;
 The old snows melt from every mountainside,
 And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;
 But last year's bitter loving must remain
 Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide!
 There are a hundred places where I fear
 To go,—so with his memory they brim!
 And entering with relief some quiet place
 Where never fell his foot or shone his face
 I say, "There is no memory of him here!"
 And so stand stricken, so remembering him!

**Dirge Without Music**

I am not resigned to the shutting away of loving hearts in
 the hard ground.
 So it is, and so it will be, for so it has been, time out of mind:
 Into the darkness they go, the wise and the lovely. Crowned
 With lilies and with laurel they go; but I am not resigned.

Lovers and thinkers, into the earth with you.
 Be one with the dull, the indiscriminate dust.
 A fragment of what you felt, of what you knew,
 A formula, a phrase remains,—but the best is lost.

The answers quick and keen, the honest look, the laughter,
 the love,—

They are gone. They have gone to feed the roses. Elegant
 and curled

Is the blossom. Fragrant is the blossom. I know. But I do
 not approve.

More precious was the light in your eyes than all the roses
 in the world.

Down, down, down into the darkness of the grave
 Gently they go, the beautiful, the tender, the kind;
 Quietly they go, the intelligent, the witty, the brave.
 I know. But I do not approve. And I am not resigned.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR . . .

On October 19, 1950, Edna St. Vincent Millay died in her beloved farmhouse in northern New York. She had lived there, alone and in seclusion since the death of her husband some months before. Miss Millay was born in Rockland, Me., on February 22, 1892. She was graduated from Vassar College in 1917. Her poem "Renaissance" was published while she was still a student and critics and public agreed that a new literary star had risen. Many volumes of poetry followed. Perhaps the best are *A Few Figs from Thistles*, *The Harp-Weaver* (which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1923), *The Buck in the Snow*, and *Conversation at Midnight*. She also wrote for the stage—three one-act plays in verse, and the libretto for Deems Taylor's opera in English, *The King's Henchman*. Her poetry is seldom happy, but she gave to traditional lyric forms a glowing freshness and a poignant beauty. Many consider her the finest sonnet writer in English since Elizabeth Browning.

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The Future Is Now

A great writer looks at the troubled world of the atomic bomb and offers a credo for creative living

NOT so long ago I was reading in a magazine some instructions as to how to behave if and when we see that flash brighter than the sun which means that the atom bomb has arrived. I read, of course, with the intense interest of one who has everything to learn on this subject; but at the end, the advice dwindled to this: the only real safety seems to lie in simply being somewhere else at the time, the farther away the better; the next best, failing access to deep shelters, bombproof cellars and all, is to get under a stout table—that is, just what you might do if someone were throwing bricks through your window and you had nothing handy to throw back.

This comic anticlimax to what I had been taking as a serious educational piece surprised me into real laughter, hearty and carefree. It is such a relief to be told the truth, or even just the facts, so pleasant not to be coddled with unreasonable hopes. That very evening I was drawn away from my work table to my fifth-story window by one of those shrill terror-screaming sirens: A fire? Police chasing a gangster? Somebody being got to the hospital in a hurry? Some distinguished public guest being transferred from one point to another? Strange aircraft coming over, maybe?

At that doubtful moment, framed in a lighted window level with mine in the apartment house across the street, I saw a young man in a white T-shirt and white shorts at work polishing a long, beautiful dark table top. It was obviously his own table in his own flat, and he was enjoying his occupation. He was bent over in perfect concentration, rubbing, sandpapering, running the flat of his palm over the surface, standing back now and then to get the sheen of light on the fine wood. I am sure he had not even raised his head at the noise of the siren, much less had he come to the window. I stood there admiring his workmanlike devotion to a good job worth doing, and there flashed through me one of those pure fallacies of feeling which suddenly overleap reason: surely all that effort and energy so irreproachably employed were not going to be wasted on a table that was to be used merely for crawling under at some unspecified date. Or why take all those

pains to make it beautiful? Any sort of old board would do.

I was so shocked at this treachery of the lurking Foul Fiend (despair is a foul fiend, and this was despair) I stood a moment longer, looking out and around, trying to collect my feelings, trying to think a little. On the sidewalk, a boy and a girl strolled along with their arms around each other. Other citizens of all sizes and kinds and ages were crossing back and forth; lights flashed red and green, punctually. Motors zoomed by, and over the great city—but where am I going? I never read other people's descriptions of great cities, more particularly if it is a great city I know. It doesn't belong here anyway, except that I had again that quieting sense of the continuity of human experience on this earth, its perpetual aspirations, setbacks, failures and re-beginnings in eternal hope; and that, with some appreciable differences of dress, customs and means of conveyance, so people have lived and moved in the cities they have built for more millenia than we are yet able to account for, and will no doubt build and live for as many more.

Why did this console me? I cannot say; my mind is of the sort that can often be soothed with large generalities of that nature. The silence of the spaces between the stars does not affright me, because I am unable to imagine it except poetically; and my awe is not for the silence and space of the endless universe but for the inspired imagination of man, who can think and feel so, and turn a phrase like that to communicate it to us. Then, too, I like the kind of honesty and directness of the young soldier who lately answered someone who asked him if he knew what he was fighting for. "I sure do," he said, "I am fighting to live."

And as for the future, I was once

reading the first writings of a young girl, an apprentice author, who was quite impatient to find her way into print. There is very little one can say of use in such matters, but I advised her against haste—she could so easily regret it. "Give yourself time," I said, "the future will take care of itself." This opinionated young person looked down her little nose at me and said, "The future is now." She may have heard the phrase somewhere and liked it, or she may just have naturally belonged to that school of thinking; I am sure she was too young to have investigated the thought deeply. But maybe she was right and the future does arrive every day and it is all we have, from one second to the next.

So I glanced again at the young man at work, a proper-looking candidate for the armed services, and realized the plain, homely fact: he was not preparing a possible shelter, something to cower under trembling; he was restoring a beautiful surface to put his books and papers on. He was full of the deep, right, instinctive, human belief that he and the table were going to be around together for a long time. Even if he is off to the Army next week, it will be there when he gets back. At the very least, he is doing something he feels is worth doing now, and that is no small thing.

At once the difficulty, and the hope, of our special time in this world of Western Europe and America is that we have been brought up for many generations in the belief that all humanity was almost unanimously engaged in going forward naturally to better things and to higher reaches.

Mr. Toynbee has even simplified this view for us with picture diagrams of various sections of humanity, each in its own cycle rising to its own height,



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struggling beautifully on from craggy level to level, but always upward. Whole peoples are arrested at certain points, and perish there, but others go on.

There is also the school of thought. Oriental and very ancient, which gives to life the spiral shape, and the spiral moves by nature upward. Even adherents of the circular or recurring-cycle school, also ancient and honorable, somehow do finally allow that the circle is a thread that spins itself out one layer above another, so that even though it is perpetually at every moment passing over a place it has been before, yet by its own width it will have risen just so much higher.

These are admirable attempts to get a little harmony and order into our view of our destiny, in that same spirit which moves the artist to labor with his little handful of chaos, bringing it to coherency within a frame; but on the visible evidence we must admit that in human nature the spirit of contradiction more than holds its own.

MANKIND has always built a little more than he has hitherto been able or willing to destroy; got more children than he has been able to kill; founded more religions than he was able to practice or even to believe in; made in general many more promises than he could keep; and has been known more than once to commit suicide through mere fear of death.

Now in our time, in his pride to explore his universe to its unimaginable limits and to exceed his possible powers, he has at last produced an embarrassing series of engines too powerful for their containers and too tricky for their mechanicians; millions of labor-saving gadgets which can be rendered totally useless by the mere failure of the public power plants, and has reduced himself to such helplessness that a dozen or less of the enemy could disable a whole city by throwing a few switches. This paradoxical creature has committed all these extravagances and created all these dangers and sufferings in a quest—we are told—for peace and security.

How much of this are we to believe, when with the pride of Lucifer, the recklessness of Icarus, the boldness of Prometheus and the intellectual curiosity of Adam and Eve (yes, intellectual; the serpent promised them wisdom if . . .) man has obviously outreached himself, to the point where he cannot understand his own science or control his own inventions? Indeed he has become as the gods, who have over and

About the Author

Katherine Anne Porter is regarded by many critics as the most outstanding of American short story writers, a reputation that is based largely on two collections of stories, *Pale Horse, Pale Rider* and *Flowering Judas*. Born in Indian Creek, Texas, Miss Porter was educated at a small Southern school for girls and describes herself in adolescence as being "precocious, nervous, rebellious, and unteachable." From an early age writing short stories has been her major interest. She reports that the novel on which she has been working for several years is nearly finished.

over again suffered defeat and downfall at the hands of their creatures.

Having devised the most exquisite and instantaneous means of communication to all corners of the earth, for years upon years friends were unable even to get a post card message to each other across national frontiers. The newspapers assure us that from the kitchen tap there flows a chemical, cheap and available, to make a bomb more disturbing to the imagination even than the one we so appallingly have; yet no machine has been invented to purify that water so that it will not spoil even the best tea or coffee. Or at any rate, it is not in use. We are the proud possessors of rocket bombs that go higher and farther and faster than any ever before, and there is some talk of a rocket ship shortly to take off for the moon. (My plan is to stow away.) We may indeed reach the moon someday, and I dare predict that will happen before we have devised a decent system of city garbage disposal.

This lunatic atom bomb has succeeded in rousing the people of all nations to the highest point of moral dudgeon; great numbers of persons are frightened who never really had much cause to be frightened before. This world has always been a desperately dangerous place to live for the greater part of the earth's inhabitants; it was, however reluctantly, endured as the natural state of affairs. Yet the invention of every new weapon of war has always been greeted with horror and righteous indignation, especially by those who failed to invent it, or who were threatened with it first . . . bows and arrows, stone cannon balls, gunpowder, flintlocks, pistols, the dum dum bullet, the Maxim silencer, the machine gun, poison gas, armored tanks, and on and on to the grand climax—if it should prove to be—of the experiment on Hiroshima.

And as for Hiroshima, surely it could

not have been the notion of sudden death of others that shocked us? How could it be, when in two great wars within one generation we have become familiar with millions of shocking deaths, by sudden violence of most cruel devices, and by agonies prolonged for years in prisons and hospitals and concentration camps. We take with apparent calmness the news of the deaths of millions by flood, famine, plague—no, all the frontiers of danger are down now, no one is safe, no one, and that, alas, really means all of us. It is our own deaths we fear, and so let's out with it and give up our fine debauch of moralistic frenzy over Hiroshima.

I fail entirely to see why it is more criminal to kill a few thousand persons in one instant than it is to kill the same number slowly over a given stretch of time. If I have a choice, I'd as lief be killed by an atom bomb as by a hand grenade or a flame thrower. If dropping the atom bomb is an immoral act, then the making of it was too; and writing of the formula was a crime, since those who wrote it must have known what such a contrivance was good for. So, morally speaking, the bomb is only a magnified hand grenade, and the crime, if crime it is, is still murder. It was never anything else. Our protocriminal then was the man who first struck fire from flint, for from that moment we have been coming steadily to this day and this weapon and this use of it. What would you have advised instead? That the human race should have gone on sitting in caves gnawing raw meat and beating each other over the head with the bones?

THERE is a concluding passage in a very fine book, *The House of Breath*, by a young writer, William Goyen, who has been to one war and may go to another, which rather answers the above question: "Go into the world, go build cities, go discover countries; go spread love, go give, go make magnificence, get and give light, save and join and piece together. . . . Gather the broken pieces, connect them. . . . For we have been given a broken world to live in—make like a map a world where all things are linked together. . . ."

There is hardly a time when these words would not have been timely. And yet maybe it is not so much a broken world as an uncreated one, even yet—still in shapeless fragments waiting to be put together properly. I imagine that when we want something better, we may have it: at perhaps no greater price than we have already paid for the worse.



Mahbud Ali, an Afghan trader (Errol Flynn), is one of the key figures in "The Great Game."



Mahbud Ali often pays Kim (Dean Stockwell) to carry messages to the chief of the British Secret Service. Dressed as a Hindu boy, his face and hands stained a dusky color, Kim executes difficult missions without arousing suspicion and on one occasion saves the horse trader's life.



A deep bond of affection springs up between the homeless Kim and a wandering Tibetan lama (Paul Lukas). Kim becomes the lama's *chela*, a disciple who, according to Indian custom, begs food for his master.



While traveling with the lama, Kim is captured by an Irish regiment. His identity discovered, he is packed off to school which seems unbearably dull after his adventurous existence. Kim stays in school only because his lama wishes him to have an education.

Kim

A classic among novels of adventures and intrigue, Rudyard Kipling's tale of an orphaned boy who is trained for "The Great Game" (as Kipling called the British Secret Service) has been made into a dashing Technicolor film. Photographed by M-G-M in India, the story is set in the late 19th century when the British governed India. Coming to the screen at this time, *Kim* has an ironic suggestion of history's way of repeating itself: one of the problems besetting the British at that time was the Russian-instigated uprising on the northern border of India. Kim, the son of an Irish soldier stationed in India until his death, has grown up as a Hindu street urchin. Kim's courage, resourcefulness, and knowledge of Indian customs land him in the thick of the conspiracy.



During Kim's summer vacation the Secret Service takes him in hand to train him for "The Great Game." He again meets his hero, Mahbud Ali (disguised as a goatherd), and together they foil a Russian plot to invade the Khyber Pass.

Young Voices

SELECTIONS CONTRIBUTED BY STUDENT WRITERS

THE short short story needn't always have a "trick" ending. Sometimes it's just a beautifully detailed account of a moment in time—a fleeting episode that brings into sharp focus a scene, a mood, a personality. This is true of Mary Lockwood's "Cup of Coffee." Mary won a commendation in the National Scholastic Writing Awards of 1950.

Cup of Coffee

A little man in a worn gray topcoat pushed open the swinging door, shook the snow from his collar, and shuffled quietly over to the counter.

The soda jerk winked at another customer, then regarded the little man solemnly. "Whatsa matter, Jonathan? Out of a job?" He grinned at the other customer. "Jonathan's been out of a job for six years," he said, sliding the words out sideways.

The little man stiffened. "I am temporarily unemployed," he corrected with dignity. He fumbled in his pockets. "A cup of coffee, please," he said. The soda jerk moved away grinning. The little man sat staring emptily at the floor, half-listening to the music that bounced from a cheap portable radio on the counter. Then, with a quick movement of his arm, he reached over and began to twist the dial. The swiny tune merged into a commentator, then a crooner, and, finally, at the end of the dial, into a piano concerto. The little man straightened up, ignoring the coffee cup waiting by his elbow. His hands quivered and his eyes were clouded with half-remembrance. The soda jerk grinned at no one in particular and tapped his forehead with a finger expressively.

The door swung open, and a crowd of shouting teen-agers came in. They raced for seats at the counter, enveloping the little man in their noise.

"Hey, Jake, make mine a lemon Coke!"

"Make that two, Jake!"

"Comin' up." Jake smiled easily. The piano concerto rippled on above the confusion, and the little man sat staring into space, while his coffee cooled. At last one of the girls noticed him. She nudged the girl next to her. "Hey, Marilyn, get this guy!"

Marilyn giggled and snapped her gum noisily. The little man sat motionless. The first girl stared critically at her reflection in the long mirror opposite

the counter, then took out a compact and began smearing her mouth with a bright fuchsia lipstick. She brushed accidentally against the little man's coffee cup, and the coffee made a black moat around the cup.

"Oh—sorry," she said, sliding the compact back into her purse. The little man didn't move. She exchanged glances with Marilyn and the soda jerk. The piano concerto soared on above the noise, filling the highest corners of the room with its sadness.

Someone at the other end of the counter yelled, "Hey, turn that thing off and get some good music, for Pete's sake!" Marilyn put down her Coke and reached across the little man to the



radio. She flipped the dial, and brittle jazz splintered in the close air of the room.

The little man started dazedly. "Don't do that," he murmured, frowning and clutching the edge of the counter with trembling hands.

Marilyn hooted. "He says, 'Don't do that!'" she informed the others shrilly. "You hear? The guy says, 'Don't do that!'" They joined loudly in her laughter. A few couples got up and began jitterbugging. The little man pushed a dime across the counter, rose, and made his way quietly to the door. It squeaked a farewell as he went out into the snow.

The soda jerk shook his head. "That guy's a queer one all right," he remarked to the room in general. "Didn't even touch his coffee. Don't matter none to me, though. Just so long as he pays his dime 's all right with me, yessir. . . ."

Whistling "Twelfth Street Rag," he began mopping up with a cold dishrag the place where the little man's cup had been.

Mary Lockwood, 15
Palo Alto (Calif.) H. S.
Teacher, Naomi Gill

Two poems in the winter mood give you a chance to compare the elemental power of James Kennedy's verse with the cool cynicism of Don-David Lusterman's. James won an honorable mention, and Don-David a commendation, in the National Scholastic Writing Awards of 1950.

Winter: An Ode

When Autumn crawls into her tomb
And hides her fiery eyes,
Thrown wide are the iron gates of gloom,
Wild Winter storms the skies!

On great black chariots
by black stallions drawn
He hurls thunder shocks!
He wields his white lash
with a mighty steed arm
And cracks the naked rocks!

His deep gray-lunged breath proudly
shrieks
Across steep barren-shouldered peaks.

His heavy-wheeled reinless chariots
rumble boldly across the darkening
clouds!
And when his impetuous stallions retire,
He smothers the earth in a wide
white shroud.

Then he rests silently on a wind-
whipped mountain
And watches an unmoving frozen
fountain
Reflecting the whiteness he spread
in mirrors frozen dead.

His bridleless steeds quit their violent
pace
To rest for a while on a dark lake's face,
Until the Spring sends them in flight—
As Day sends Night.

James Kennedy, 17
University H. S.
Los Angeles, California
Teacher, Katherine M. Reed

New Year's Eve: New York City

New Year's Eve
in the City:
A million People—
and still no one.
The bright but tranquil
moon and stars
are in the Heavens,
and moving People look
at moving cartoons
and marvel at the
wonders of the

Cathleen Burns, Young Voices Editor

Mind of Man,
so clever
to make
light bulbs move.

The People
in the City
on New Year's Eve
wait like
pistol triggers
to be pulled
as the clock
strikes twelve.

Don-David Lusterman, 17
Baldwin (N. Y.) H. S.
Teacher, Alice Prendergast

For many Americans the New Year derives special beauty and meaning from the Old-World customs of their ancestors. In a frank and charming essay, Sadako Tottori describes how Japanese-Americans in Hawaii welcome this turning point of the year. Sadako won an honorable mention in last spring's Scholastic Writing Awards.

New Year's Day at Home

As long as I can remember, I have felt that I am perhaps a bit luckier than children of other nationalities because of the festivals our family celebrates. Of course, we are all Americans; we have the same rights and privileges as other Americans. But our family celebrates both American and Japanese holidays. Some parents do not carry over from the Old World those customs and holidays which make America interesting and colorful.

In our home we have many interesting customs. We celebrate what are known among the Japanese as "Boys'

Day" and "Girls' Day." But I look forward to New Year's Day most. I cherish it because of the unique customs we carry out on that day.

On the last day of the old year the whole family eats "osaba," or dark noodles. Everyone is required to eat or at least taste them. This custom is so old that we no longer remember the significance of it.

The family is not supposed to do housework of any sort, except necessary cooking or washing the dishes. The day before New Year's, therefore, we prepare the food so that it needs only to be cooked. The house is spick and span; no one has to do much housework.

On this day there is to be no quarreling. My mother said that if we do on New Year's Day the things we are not supposed to do, we will do them the whole year through. We are careful to behave.

On New Year's Eve my brothers and sisters go out into the night to shoot firecrackers. I do not like the noise; so I leave that part of the celebration to them. When the church bell rings at twelve, all of us go to church to attend the New Year's service. Afterwards we wish everyone a very happy and successful New Year.

The next morning my mother is up very early preparing breakfast, a special one which is served only once a year. My father writes our names on place cards, which are sheets of paper folded so that we can thrust the chopsticks through them. These are set on the table with the teacups and bowls. In the teacups are "ume" and tea. In the bowls is a soup called "ozoni" with "mochi," vegetables, and "kobu." When everyone is seated, we wish one another a very happy New Year. I do not care too much for the "ozoni"; so I fill my bowl with black beans to change the taste.

My little brothers and sisters hurry through their courses because at their places are envelopes with money in them. They are not to touch these envelopes until they have finished their meal. This custom is called "otoshidama." The children may not know the Japanese meaning, but they certainly know what the envelopes contain! Since I am older, I pretend that I can control myself more carefully and go through my breakfast calmly. However, it certainly is torture if I know I have not behaved well throughout the year, for these envelopes are filled according



to one's behavior and age. It is certainly disgraceful to have someone younger receive more money. I must have behaved very nicely—or my age made up for it—because last year I received much more than the younger ones.

After breakfast, the girls help clear the table and wash the dishes. We need not do anything else, since everything has been prepared and my mother does the cooking. We always have food ready to set on the table, because many people drop in to wish my parents a happy New Year. They drink "sake" and eat Japanese delicacies while they visit.

We have many delicious foods for lunch. My mother combines American food with Japanese, such as roast with all its trimmings and Japanese "sukiyaki." My eyes are bigger than my stomach; I always get filled before I know it. Since I wash the lunch dishes, I take care that I need not wash many by substituting paper cups, paper plates, and chopsticks that can be thrown away.

With a whole afternoon to spend, my friends and I try to see two motion pictures. If I remained at home, I should have to greet the old people and bow constantly, which I do not like.

To me the New Year's festivity is the most leisurely and happiest of the year.

Sadako Tottori, 17
McKinley High School
Honolulu, Oahu, T. H.
Teacher, Mildred V. Gordon

See Yourself in Print

• Have you a short story, poem, or essay, of which you're especially proud? Send it to the Young Voices Editor, Scholastic Magazines, 7 East 12th Street, New York 3, N. Y. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish your contribution returned. Individual criticism will be given at the editor's discretion. Material published is automatically considered for awards in the annual Scholastic Writing Awards and for honors in those areas where Regional Scholastic Writing Awards are sponsored by local newspapers.



Rudolf Bing, Met's new manager, presents five American sopranos whom he has engaged for 1950-51 season, part of policy to bring new blood into the organization. L. to r. Marguerite Piazza (New Orleans), Lucine Amara (San Francisco), Genevieve Warner (Amsterdam, N. Y.), Barbara Troxell (Easton, Pa.), Roberta Peters (N. Y. C.).



Margaret Webster, noted stage director, and Rolf Gerard, who designed sets and costumes for Don Carlo, work out stage lighting with Jacob Buchter (left) chief electrician.

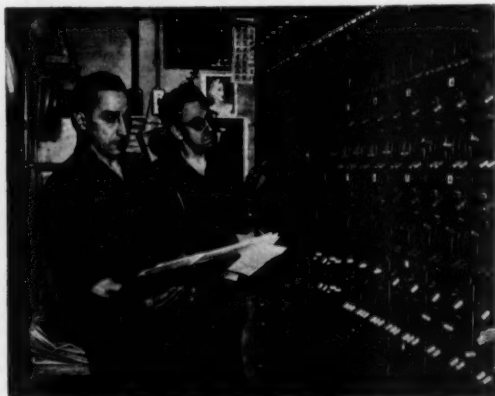


Henry Siegel, an electrician, watches stage action from his private box in the footlights, then cues his fellow electricians who operate the Met's massive light board (see right).

Backstage

New York City's Metropolitan Opera Company is undergoing a face-lifting this season. If the operation has inspired lifted eyebrows among more conservative opera-goers, it seems to be paying off at the box-office—and after seasons of operating in the red, the sound of a steadily jingling cash register should sound as sweet to the directors of the nation's opera center as an aria by Dorothy Kirsten.

The man largely responsible for the innovations at the "Met" is Mr. Rudolf Bing, who left a distinguished musical career in England to become the



Sopranos and baritones may take the bows, but electricians and dozens of other skilled technicians play key roles in production of an opera.



Bing visits the men's wardrobe room to inspect one of the new costumes designed for this season's productions. On opening night last November, the house was packed and a television audience of 4,000,000 sat in on the gala event.



A prop man advises baritone Robert Merrill on best weapon for his role in Verdi's *Don Carlo*, one of several operas Bing has reinstated in Met's repertoire.

at the "Met"

new manager of the Metropolitan. In answer to frequent criticisms that the Met's productions have been performed before moth-eaten sets and with little effort on the part of the singers to make the operas dramatically convincing, Bing has hired top stage designers and directors and signed up fresh, young singers. When Bing saw a block-long line of weary standees waiting to get tickets to his opening-night performance of *Don Carlo*, he won their hearts by sending 100 containers of coffee to brighten their stand.



Fritz Reiner rehearses the orchestra. Reiner, formerly the conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, has been enthusiastically received in his new post as the maestro of the Metropolitan.



Chorus rehearses a scene from Mozart's *Magic Flute*, one opera in the Met's program that is sung in English. (Photographs by Sedge Leblang. Reproduced by courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera Co.)

He let his uncle drop two hundred feet without moving an
inch to save him . . . then proved he didn't lack courage

The Long Fall

CHARACTERS

Ironworker	Swede
Joe Larkin	Bill Morgan
James O'Malley	Charlie Morgan
Nick Bruno	Bland

TIME: The present. Winter.

PLACE: A Construction Company shack, at the base of a bridge.

The scene is the exterior of a shack at the base of a bridge in the process of construction. The shack itself, wooden, weather-stained, with a sloping roof, is located at right; it begins about stage center and extends off right. It is raised off the ground. Two steps lead to a door in the left wall of the shack. One window is set in the right wall; two more in the upstage wall. A large sign hangs on the edge of the roof: MORGAN AND O'MALLEY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY. The downstage wall of the shack is open to the audience. Inside, there is a pot-bellied stove, a desk, a drafting table, and a coat-rack. At left, the base of a bridge extends upwards, before a sky background. A dock overlooking the river, center, is approached between the shack and the base of the bridge. A large perforated metal barrel for fire stands up center. A large empty reel for wire-rope is down left. Dirty snow covers the ground; and there is a general impression of cold and bleakness. It is winter, about eleven o'clock in the morning.

Joe Larkin, a small, neat, nervous man of about 45, dressed in a faded grey shirt, black leather tie, dark grey working trousers, and a leather jacket, is standing inside the office looking up at the bridge through one of the upstage windows. An Ironworker is standing beside the fire barrel, warming his hands, and also looking up at the bridge. There is a quality of apprehension in the attitudes of both men. After a moment, the Ironworker turns, picks up a pair of wire-rope slings resting against the steps of the shack, and goes off left. The telephone in the shack rings; after a pause Larkin turns to answer it.

LARKIN (Into phone): Morgan and

O'Malley Construction Company. Who's this? . . . Who? . . . Oh, *Evening Ledger*, huh? . . . I'm Joe Larkin, the time-keeper. What do you want? . . . Oh. . . . Yeah, yeah, that's right. About an hour ago. His name was Duke Morgan. . . . No, they haven't found him yet; the current washed him under the ice. . . . Nobody's at fault. Usually when a man falls, it's nobody's fault but his own. . . . Ice? . . . Sure, there's ice; what about it? Men often work in weather like this, ice or no ice. . . . Yeah, the second accident since yesterday. . . . Bill Morgan is bossing this job. . . . No, he's not responsible. You might be interested in knowing it was his own brother who got killed! . . . (Vehemently) Listen, mister, somebody's been giving you the wrong dope; you're dead wrong. . . . Of course you can send a man over; we got nothing to hide! . . . Okay, okay!

(Larkin slams down the phone, turns, sees James O'Malley, who has entered from left and come into the shack during the latter part of Larkin's speech. O'Malley is a stout, well-dressed man of about 50.) Oh, hello, Mr. O'Malley.

O'MALLEY: Hello, Joe. Who was that?

LARKIN: News editor of the *Ledger*. He wanted to know about the accident. He's sending a man over.

O'MALLEY: That's why I'm here, too. Morgan called me a little while ago. What's this about his brother getting killed? He only told me someone had fallen. It wasn't Duke?

LARKIN: Yeah. He fell into the river from one of the towers. The current got him under the ice, and they haven't found him yet.

O'MALLEY: That's awful! (After a pause.) How's Morgan taking it?

LARKIN: I don't know. He hasn't said a thing. You know how he is; never shows nothing.

O'MALLEY: Did his boy, Charlie, start this morning?

LARKIN: Yeah. He'll only be here for a couple of weeks, though. Then he goes back to school. He's home for Christmas.

O'MALLEY: I know. He's a nice lad. LARKIN: Nice lad, I broke him in last summer—on the Crocker job.

O'MALLEY (After a pause): What did you tell the *Ledger* was the wrong dope?

LARKIN (Reluctantly): It was—uh—it was about our outfit.

O'MALLEY: What was it?

LARKIN: This guy wanted to know if it was true that more men get killed on Morgan-O'Malley jobs than with any other contractors.

O'MALLEY (After a pause): When the reporter gets here, send him to me. I don't want him nosing around the job, trying to stir up trouble.

LARKIN: Yes, sir.

O'MALLEY: Where's Mr. Morgan?

LARKIN: He's over the other shack, drawing up a report to turn in to the union.

O'MALLEY: Find him, and tell him I'd like to see him. Have the blueprints for the center span arrived?

LARKIN: Yes, sir. They're on the table.

O'MALLEY (Pauses before the drafting table): How do the men feel about it?

LARKIN: Not so good. Two men have fallen since yesterday. You know how it is; a lot of times these things seem to run in threes. No one likes to work with that hanging over him.

O'MALLEY: Nonsense. Two accidents don't necessitate a third. Ironworkers are like children—believe in old wives' tales. (Pause.) Did anyone quit?

LARKIN: No. They're sticking because of the extra money. Mr. Morgan gave the Duke's gang the rest of the day off; they were pretty shaken up. (Pause.) Then there's the ice! The men don't like that.

O'MALLEY: I know it, but there's nothing we can do. If we could only get a break with this weather. . . . (Shrugs.) Well, tell Mr. Morgan I'd like to see him. I'll wait here.

LARKIN: Okay, Mr. O'Malley.

(He exits from the shack, and starts to cross right. Nick Bruno enters from left, followed by Swede. Nick is a dark,

By **CARROLL V. HOWE**
Illustrated by **Harrison Van Duyke**

muscular, intense man of 35. Swede is tall, blond, slow-moving, about five years younger. Both are wearing working clothes.)

NICK (Calling to Larkin): Joe, hey, Joe!

LARKIN (Turning): Nick! What are you guys doing here? I thought Morgan gave you the rest of the day off?

NICK: Swede and I decided to stick around for awhile. Have any new guys been hired during the last couple of days?

LARKIN: Sure, why?

NICK: Who are they?

LARKIN: A couple of punks. Dutch van Riper's gang was a man short after Georgie fell yesterday and—say, what's this all about, anyway?

SWEDE (Slowly): Duke landed on a scaffold on the lower level first, then rolled off into the river. Nick saw some guy down there, only about ten feet away from Duke, but he didn't do nothing—just stood there and watched him fall. Nick saw the guy, clear, but didn't recognize him.

NICK: I saw him, all right. His face even looked familiar. But I know I ain't seen him before on this job.

SWEDE: So we thought it might be a new man, if anybody's been hired.

NICK: Dutch's gang worked the lower level this morning, didn't they?

LARKIN (Slowly): Yeah, they did, but on the other side. They were on the other side of the river.



NICK: Well, this other punk—where was he working?

LARKIN (*Hesitantly*): Uh—I don't know. He—uh—I think they put him on the lift. Yeah, that's right. I remember now. He'd never done this work before, so they put him on the lift.

SWED: Then he couldn't have been there when Duke fell.

LARKIN: I guess not.

NICK: This don't add up! Who is this guy, anyway?

LARKIN (*Hesitates again*): Ah—I don't know. I'd never seen him before. Mr. Morgan called up the union hall; they sent him over this morning.

SWED: And those two are the only new men on the job?

LARKIN: That's right. (*A pause. To Nick, placatingly.*) You're all jazzed up, Nick. Why don't you go home and relax? Maybe you just imagined you saw this guy.

NICK (*Angrily*): I'm not imagining it. Wasn't I there? I remember it all. Swede's passing; I'm on the gun; Duke's catching. Swede throws this rivet—I guess Duke isn't ready—he makes a phony pass, and it takes him on the chest. He yells and falls over backwards. I nearly go over myself making a grab for him. (*With mounting intensity; re-living it.*) He lands on a scaffold about 20 feet down—starts to pull himself up—real slow, like he's punch. . . . I yell, "Don't move!" Then I see this other guy, standing there only ten feet from Duke. . . . "Run over and grab him!" Guy don't move. (*Approaching hysteria.*) Duke on his knees, hanging on the edge, crawling right off . . . keeps turning over in the air . . . then he hits, two hundred feet down! . . . Sound of ice breaking comes back up—seems about a year later. (*Long pause; he comes back to himself.*) I lay down on the edge, shaking. I covered my eyes. When I looked again, there was only a hole in the ice, and this other guy was gone. I've been looking for him ever since. (*His voice breaks. He is trembling with remembrance.*)

SWED (*Calmly him down*): Take it easy, Nick. You're just making it worse.

LARKIN: You ought to go home, Nick. You aren't doing yourself any good going around like this.

NICK: I'm not leaving till I find that guy. (*In a burst.*) Damn it, the Duke could still be alive! (*Pause.*) Come on, Swede, let's look around some more. (*Nick exits left.*)

SWED (*Turning before he exits*): I think you're stalling us, Larkin. If you know who this guy is, tell him to get out of here. The way Nick is jazzed up, he'll kill him. (*Follows Nick out. Larkin turns, starts to cross right. O'Malley appears at the door of the shack.*)

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O'MALLEY: Larkin, have you seen Mr. Morgan yet?

LARKIN: I'm sorry, Mr. O'Malley. I got held up. I'll go right over.

(*He starts offstage right, stops. Bill Morgan enters from right. He is a tall, muscular, athletic man of 50. He moves purposefully, with an easy sense of power. His features are rough and impassive, there is about them the tough unyielding quality of weathered granite.*) Hello, Mr. Morgan.

MORGAN: Larkin, have you seen Charlie anywhere around?

LARKIN: No, I haven't, Mr. Morgan. I'm looking for him myself.

MORGAN: I haven't seen him since the accident. Look around the job for him, will you? Tell him I want to see him.

LARKIN: Okay, Mr. Morgan. (*Starts to cross.*) Oh, Mr. O'Malley wants to see you. He's in the office.

MORGAN: Thanks. (*He crosses to shack, enters.*) Hello, Jim.

O'MALLEY: Hello, Bill. Larkin told me about your brother; you didn't say who it was. I'm sorry as anything. If there's anything I can do . . .

MORGAN: There's nothing anyone can do. What's done is done.

O'MALLEY (*After a moment*): Bill, I think we ought to knock off the job until the weather clears.

MORGAN: What?

O'MALLEY: I said, "We ought to knock off the job until the weather clears."

MORGAN: Are you crazy? We can't do that. We've got every cent we own tied up in this. We've waited years for this break; if we flub it, we're finished. You know that as well as I do.

O'MALLEY: I know, but . . .

MORGAN: The state highway department is all over my back. We're a month behind schedule now.

O'MALLEY: If they'd clear our priorities, without all this red tape, we'd . . .

MORGAN: We took this job with the understanding we'd handle the priorities ourselves. We got a tough break when Donaldson wasn't re-elected, but we can do it—with a little luck.

O'MALLEY: Yes, but these accidents . . .

MORGAN: Accidents happen. That's part of the game.

O'MALLEY: But working in this weather—the ice . . .

MORGAN: The men are getting time and a half for it, aren't they? They don't have to work if they don't want to.

O'MALLEY: But I thought that with your brother . . .

MORGAN: Sentiment has no part in business. That's something else.

O'MALLEY (*After a pause*): All right, then. What do you want to do?

MORGAN: Work the rest of the week out, anyway. Once we get the center span connected, it'll be clear sailing. The weather may break any day. We'll wait and see. All right?

O'MALLEY (*Reluctantly*): I guess it has to be.

(*Charlie Morgan enters from up center right. He is like his father, tall, muscular, but of slighter build. He is about 23. He is dressed in working clothes. He goes into the shack.*)

CHARLIE: Hello, Dad. I heard over at the other shack you were looking for me. Hello, Mr. O'Malley.

O'MALLEY: Hello, Charlie. I'm terribly sorry about your uncle.

MORGAN (*He is obviously very fond and proud of Charlie*): I was looking for you after the accident. Where have you been?

CHARLIE: I didn't feel so good. I've been sitting out on the dock, looking at the ice. They've sent a diver down.

MORGAN: I know. You all right now?

CHARLIE: I'm all right now.

MORGAN: Where were you when Duke fell?

CHARLIE (*After a short pause*): On the lower level.

MORGAN: Did you see him fall?

CHARLIE: No. N-no, I didn't. Someone yelled over, there'd been an accident. Then I found out it was Duke.

O'MALLEY: You don't look so good, Charlie. Maybe you'd better take the rest of the day off.

CHARLIE: I'm all right. I walked over and looked at them diving for him. It made me sick for awhile, thinking about it. But I'm all right now.

O'MALLEY: This is your first day at this work?

CHARLIE: I worked at it last summer, but on the ground—rod man. I'm having trouble with the height.

O'MALLEY: Everyone goes through that—you'll get used to it. It just takes time.

CHARLIE: Yeah, I guess so.

O'MALLEY: Bill, I think I'll go back uptown. I'm supposed to meet Bradley about the girder shipment for the center span. (Pauses.) By the way, the Ledger is sending a reporter to cover the accident. Take care of him, will you? Don't let him get too nosy.

MORGAN: Okay. I'll call you if anything develops.

O'MALLEY: I'll stop back again this evening. (To Charlie.) Good-bye, Charlie. Try not to let what happened this morning get on your nerves. And extend to your uncle's family my deepest sympathy.

CHARLIE: I'll do that, Mr. O'Malley.
O'MALLEY: I'll see you a little later, Bill.

MORGAN: See you.
(O'Malley exits left. Father and son turn and look at each other. Morgan speaks.) Well, son?

CHARLIE: It seems sort of hard to realize that—Duke's dead—doesn't it?

MORGAN: Yes—it does.

CHARLIE: Have you told—Clara?

MORGAN: No. Not yet. I thought we'd do it together—tonight. (Pause.) I'm afraid she'll take it hard. They're just buying a new house.

CHARLIE: Dad, I . . . (Hesitates.)

MORGAN: What?

CHARLIE: I want to quit.

MORGAN: What!

CHARLIE: I don't think I'm going to be any good at this.

MORGAN: Nonsense. You're upset. It's the accident.

CHARLIE: Ever since it happened, I've been walking around down here, trying to get up nerve to go back up.

MORGAN: Why don't you?

CHARLIE: I started to—a couple of times. But I couldn't. To tell the truth, I'm scared. I'm scared I'll fall, too. (Hesitates.) Maybe I can try it again another time.

MORGAN: You think it's as simple as that—that it will be easier another time?

CHARLIE: I don't know. It might be.

MORGAN: I'll tell you; it won't be. It will be worse another time, because you'll spend from now to then thinking about it. It will magnify itself. You've got to get over these things quickly. Face your fear, beat it out of you, and you'll be all right. But if you let it go, you'll never be able to get rid of it.

CHARLIE (After a moment): But suppose I should fall?

MORGAN: You won't fall. Get that idea out of your head! Accidents happen on all jobs. Just watch yourself! The new man never falls; he's too careful. It's only the oldtimers, like Duke; they get careless. Or sometimes a wise kid, trying to show off, trying to impress the others. But even that's rare.

CHARLIE: It's more than just being

careful. I can't move around right up there. My muscles freeze up; they don't function. I get a sort of paralysis.

MORGAN: That's because you're thinking about it. Concentrate on what you're doing—don't worry about anything else—and everything will be all right. (Pause.) If you want to take the rest of the day off, you'll probably feel better tomorrow.

CHARLIE: It'll be worse tomorrow; you just said that yourself. (Pause.) Damn it, I can't help being afraid of height.

MORGAN: You flew a P-40 during the war.

CHARLIE: That was different. I had a plane around me. Here there's nothing but a little beam hanging in space. I can't take it!

MORGAN: All right, then! If you want to quit, quit. When a man feels as you do, there's no use forcing him.

CHARLIE: I said I'll work the day out. Maybe I'll get over it. If I do, I'll stick with it.

MORGAN: You make up your own mind. I have work to do. (Morgan turns to desk. Charlie looks at his back for a moment.)

CHARLIE: I'm sorry, Dad.

(He turns and exits from the shack, starts off right, as Larkin comes in from left.)

LARKIN: Hey, Charlie!

CHARLIE (Turning): What?



LARKIN: Listen, kid, were you working around Duke's gang this morning?

CHARLIE: Yeah—earlier. I was following them up, painting rivet heads. Why?

LARKIN: On the lower level?

CHARLIE: At first. They finished, and went up on top.

LARKIN: And you stayed down below?

CHARLIE: I wasn't finished with the section.

LARKIN: Where were you when it happened?

CHARLIE (After a short pause): You mean the accident?

LARKIN: Yeah?

CHARLIE: I was over by the lift. I—uh—I'd run out of paint. I went back to get some more.

LARKIN: You sure?

CHARLIE: Of course I'm sure. I was by the lift when someone yelled over, there'd been an accident.

LARKIN: Then you weren't near Duke when he fell?

CHARLIE: No. (After a moment.) What's this all about, anyway?

LARKIN: Nick Bruno's looking for you—there might be trouble.

CHARLIE: Who's Nick Bruno?

LARKIN: The riveter in Duke's gang. It's a wonder he hasn't already found you.

CHARLIE: What does he want me for?

LARKIN: He's all jazzed up from the accident. He was there when it happened—has some crazy idea you had a chance to grab Duke from a scaffold on the lower level.

CHARLIE (Carefully): What makes him think that?

LARKIN: Like I said, he's all keyed up. He probably saw you working there earlier, and thought you were still there when Duke fell. (Pause.) You sure you weren't there?

CHARLIE: I've told you twice! I was over by the lift.

LARKIN: Okay, okay! I'd rather believe you; it makes a cleaner story. Nobody gets involved. But you'd better get out of here—just to be safe. Nick might come back around here any minute now.

CHARLIE: So?

LARKIN: He'll probably try to beat you up—and one of you will get hurt. He and Duke were pretty close; they worked together on a lot of jobs.

CHARLIE: Suppose I stay on the job?

LARKIN: It'll cause a lot of trouble. Why bring on headaches? Be smart; your old man can get you somewhere else.

CHARLIE: Thanks. I appreciate this, Joe. But I think I'll stick around, anyway.

LARKIN: You're crazy. Besides, Nick has a good story. You were working up there. Word might get around you were there when it happened. If it did, it would be worse on your old man than you; the men aren't too happy about the accidents, as it is.

CHARLIE: But if I wasn't there?

LARKIN: If you weren't there, you know it. Things are bad enough as they are. Why make them worse?

CHARLIE: You think it'd be better if I shoved off?

LARKIN: I know it would. I been in this game a good many years; I know the way things work. (*Nick and Swede enter from left during Larkin's speech. Charlie's back is turned to them.*)

CHARLIE: Maybe you're right. I'll think it over and . . .

NICK (*Calling to Larkin*): Hey, Larkin, we been looking all over the job for that guy. I'm beginning to think I didn't even . . . (*Charlie turns and looks at Nick who sees him.*) There he is, Swede! (*Crosses to Charlie, starts to push him, feeding his own anger.*) Listen, you yellow . . . what's the idea of standing there like a piece of tripe when my buddy fell!

CHARLIE: What do you mean?

NICK (*Pushing harder*): You know what I mean! You saw me plain enough.

CHARLIE: You've got the wrong idea, fella. I . . . (*Nick lashes out viciously with a hard left to the stomach; Charlie doubles and Nick rabbit-punches him to the ground.*)

LARKIN (*Crosses to Nick, and pushes him back*): Nick, Nick, wait a minute! Maybe he can explain . . . (*Swede crosses to Larkin, and drags him away from Nick.*)

SWEDE: Okay, Larkin! Now Nick's found the guy, let him get it out of his system!

(*Nick, free from Larkin, crosses back to Charlie, who is still prostrate on the ground. He takes a spud wrench from his belt, and starts to sue it down on Charlie, who is on his knees. The door to the shack flies open, and Morgan comes out. He grabs Nick from behind, gets the wrench from him, and throws him to the ground.*)

MORGAN: What's going on here? (*No one answers.*) You, Bruno! What are you trying to do?

NICK (*Sullenly, climbing to his feet*): Ask that guy!

MORGAN (*To Charlie*): What's the trouble?

CHARLIE (*Who has risen, groggily*): Forget it. I can fight my own battles. You've nothing to do with it.

MORGAN (*After a long look at Charlie*): You, Pete! What's this all about?

LARKIN (*Temporizing*): Well, Mr. Morgan, Nick here . . .

NICK (*Interrupting*): I'll tell you what it's all about. You know this guy? (*Indicates Charlie.*)

MORGAN: He's my son.

NICK (*Incredulously*): Your what?

MORGAN: I said he's my son! Now what's the trouble?

NICK: I didn't know he was your son.

MORGAN: He is. Now what's this all about?

NICK (*Uncomfortably*): I—uh—I guess

I made a mistake. I—I thought I saw him standing on the lower level, near where Duke landed before he went on into the river. (*Pause.*) But I—I guess it couldn't have been—if he's Duke's nephew.

MORGAN: Where were you when you thought you saw him?

NICK: On the upper level, where he fell from.

SWEDE: Now wait a minute. (*Crosses to Charlie.*) Where were you when he fell?

CHARLIE: Over by the lift.

SWEDE: What were you doing there?

CHARLIE: I was getting more paint. It ran out.

SWEDE: You were following us up, weren't you?

CHARLIE: Yes.

SWEDE: We only did one section on the lower level this morning. Why did you go back for more paint after only one section?

CHARLIE: Why—I—uh . . .

SWEDE: You had a full bucket when you started, didn't you?

CHARLIE: I—I guess some of it spilled. I—I was pretty nervous this morning.

SWEDE: So nervous you can't remember if any spilled?

CHARLIE: I—uh—it must have . . . I . . .

SWEDE (*Intensely*): So nervous you can't remember if any spilled! (*There is a pause. All the men look at Charlie.*)

CHARLIE (*Finally*): All right. I was there. But I can explain . . .

MORGAN (*Looking at Charlie unbelievably*): This isn't true, Charlie! (*Charlie does not answer.*) It isn't true! You weren't there!

CHARLIE: I've already said I was. But if you'll give me a chance . . .

NICK (*Moving in*): You let your own uncle drop two hundred feet without moving an inch to save him. You lousy yellow . . .

MORGAN (*Pushing Nick back*): All right, Bruno! I'll handle this.

NICK: You say! I worked with Duke nine years. I'm supposed to let this punk get away with it, just like that?

MORGAN: He's closer than you.

NICK: Let us alone. I'll give him what's coming to him.

MORGAN: Bruno! Get your gear together, and get off the job! I told you to shove off this morning. Now beat it!—if you still want to work here.

NICK: Who says? You're a hot one, the big boss! You ain't firing me. And I'm not going yet. I got some business to settle first with this stinking . . .

MORGAN (*Reaches out, grabs Nick by the front of his jacket, swings him in close*): That's enough! (*He shoves Nick roughly over towards Swede.*) Take him off the job, Swede, before he gets himself in trouble. Bring him back tomorrow; he'll probably have snapped out of it.

row; he'll probably have snapped out of it.

SWEDE (*After a moment, crosses to Morgan*): I don't like the way you're handling this, Morgan.

MORGAN: You don't? You want to do something about it? (*There is a pause.*)

SWEDE (*Finally*): Come on, Nick, let's go.

NICK: But . . .

SWEDE: I said, "Let's go!"

(*Nick crosses to Morgan, picks up the wrench at Morgan's feet. He and Swede exit right.*)

MORGAN (*To Larkin*): Joe—make sure they get out of here.

LARKIN: Sure, Mr. Morgan. (*He exits right.*)

MORGAN (*To Charlie*): Then it's true. You were there.

CHARLIE: Yes, but—Dad, Dad, there's more to it than that.

MORGAN: How can there be more to it? You stood there and let a man fall, just like that! Your own blood you let fall, just like that!

CHARLIE: I—I tried . . . I—I couldn't do anything.

MORGAN (*Intensely*): You could; you could! No man just stands there and lets another man fall, and doesn't do anything!

CHARLIE: I—I wanted to move. I tried to move.

MORGAN (*More intensely*): That isn't true. It can't be true. Ten years ago Paul jumped across eight feet of air, from beam to beam, to save me—I wouldn't be here now. Then my own son lets him fall. How could you do that?

CHARLIE: I'm telling you I tried. But I couldn't move. (*Points to bridge, speaks hysterically.*) Look, look—there's ice on the beams! We'd both have fallen. Wouldn't you rather see me alive?

MORGAN (*After a pause, deliberately*): All my life I've lived by rules of my own making. I thought if anyone would live up to them, you would. (*In a burst.*) Darn it, even if you did fall, you should have tried!

CHARLIE (*Frantically*): You don't see it. Dad, Dad—all morning I crept around, hardly able to breathe. All morning I was froze up—my knees shook every time I had to move. I couldn't have saved him if he'd been two feet away, much less ten. (*Reliving it.*) I heard a scream, short, choked, like an animal. Then he landed, ten feet away. I didn't know who he was. When he fell, I started to fall. I grabbed the truss and held—the whole bridge was shaking—my hands acted like they weren't mine—grabbing that truss so tight—flattening me against it. Then he was gone, and I heard the smash of breaking ice. (*Pause. In a monotone.*) Then it was quiet, and

I knew it was all over, and I was standing there shaking and still holding on to the truss. . . . And I came down.

MORGAN (*Harshly*): Then you came and lied to me. Duke only just killed, and you came and lied to me.

CHARLIE (*Brokenly*): What could I do—tell you? I didn't think anyone had seen me. I didn't think anyone would know about it. (*After a moment.*) What—what do you want me to do?

MORGAN: I don't know. I only know what you should have done. Now it's too late. (*Pause.*) You'd better get off the job. This is no place for you. Go home. I'll see you this evening.

CHARLIE: What will have changed by this evening?

MORGAN: I don't know. All I know is, you're no good around here. (*In a burst.*) God, why did this have to happen?

CHARLIE: Dad, I . . .
MORGAN (*Turning in fury*): Get out of here! Go home; go back to school; go anywhere, but get away from me, you . . . (*Sick with grief and pride, he strikes Charlie heavily across the mouth. They look at each other a moment, then Charlie turns and runs off left. After a moment, Morgan crosses after him, calling.*) Charlie! (*Pause.*) Charlie!

(*There is no answer. Head bowed, Morgan crosses back towards the shack. Larkin comes in from right.*)

LARKIN: They're gone, Mr. Morgan.

MORGAN (*Dully*): Who?

LARKIN: Nick and Swede.

MORGAN: Oh.

LARKIN (*After a moment*): Mr. Morgan . . .

MORGAN: Yes?

LARKIN: I'm awfully sorry this had to happen.

MORGAN: Yes.

LARKIN: We've been in this game a long time. Maybe we've forgotten how it was at first. I remember when I started, I was afraid to move up there.

MORGAN: But to save a man's life . . .

LARKIN: Even that. Your muscles play tricks on you. It's hard to do what maybe you want to do.

MORGAN: But to keep a man from falling . . .

LARKIN: I had a chance to grab a guy who fell once, when I first started. But I couldn't move, just like your boy. I stood there—like I was paralyzed. He didn't die, but I had a bad time. Later on, I did prove myself, on another job. It was only then I knew that I'd always had the guts, but couldn't use them.

MORGAN: You had the guts, but couldn't use them?

LARKIN: That's right. (*Coaxingly.*) Tell you what, Mr. Morgan. Let me go after your boy and talk to him. He's no different than any of the other guys—

just got a tough break at the wrong time. So I'll just go and talk to him.

MORGAN (*After a moment*): All right. (*Larkin exits left. Morgan enters the shack. O'Malley and Bland enter from right, and go into shack. Bland is a reporter type.*)

O'MALLEY (*To Morgan*): Bill, Bland here is from the Ledger. I met him on my way out. I've been telling him about the accident. (*To Bland.*) This is Mr. Morgan.

BLAND: Glad to meet you, Mr. Morgan.

MORGAN (*With an effort*): Anything I can do for you?

About the Author . . .

The Long Fall was written by 28-year-old Carroll Howe at the Yale Drama School, where he is studying for a graduate degree. Born in Kearny, N. J., Howe attended schools in North Arlington and Newark, N. J. He became interested in drama during his last year at Princeton University, and after his discharge from the Marine Corps enrolled in Yale's top-notch drama school. *The Long Fall* has been produced by Yale's Experimental Theatre, and Howe is now at work on a full-length play.

BLAND: Just a little information about the accident. What time did it take place?

MORGAN: About ten-fifteen this morning.

BLAND: What was the man's name who fell?

MORGAN: Paul Morgan. He was called "Duke."

BLAND: He was your brother?

MORGAN: That's right.

BLAND: Too bad. Were there any witnesses to the accident?

MORGAN: Two. I gave them the rest of the day off.

BLAND (*A statement*): This is the second fatality in two days.

MORGAN: Yes.

BLAND: That's a pretty high mortality rate.

MORGAN: It all depends—I suppose it is—pretty high.

BLAND: Any idea what might be causing these accidents?

MORGAN: No—they just happen.

BLAND: This is rather treacherous weather to work in.

O'MALLEY (*Interceding, after an uneasy glance at Morgan*): The men work in all sorts of weather, depending on commitments.

BLAND: Oh! And who makes the commitments?

O'MALLEY: In this instance—we have.

BLAND: You mean you two?

O'MALLEY: That's right.

BLAND: I see (*Pause.*) How long has this bridge been under construction?

O'MALLEY: About nine months. We started . . . (*The alarm whistle blows off stage left, loud and piercing.*) Oh my God! (*O'Malley runs to the door of the shack.*)

BLAND: What's that?

O'MALLEY: Accident. (*Goes down stairs.*) We'd better go and see.

BLAND: Mind if I come along?

O'MALLEY: No, I don't suppose so. Come on, Bill!

(*O'Malley runs off left, followed by Bland.*)

BLAND (*As they exit*): What provisions are made for families in accidents of this sort?

(*They exit. Morgan leaves the shack, crosses to the fire barrel, looking up at the bridge. After a moment Larkin runs in from left.*)

LARKIN: Mr. Morgan!

MORGAN (*A statement*): It's Charlie.

LARKIN (*After a moment*): Yes.

MORGAN: He's . . .

(*Larkin does not answer. After a moment, Morgan bows his head. When he raises it, he is suddenly older—the vitality is gone.*)

LARKIN: I saw it. He climbed to where Duke fell from. I'd gone up on the lift. I yelled and ran across towards him. He started to cross an I-beam near the edge. He slipped—it must have been the ice. I didn't see him after he fell. He didn't yell or anything.

(*Long pause. Morgan raises his head.*)

MORGAN: Then he's . . . he's . . . (*Larkin says nothing. Morgan starts to cross right.*) Joe—I'm going home. Tell O'Malley to call up the union hall for two new men—and to write a report of the accident. . . . I'll be back in the morning. (*He stops, looks up at bridge.*) It took nerve for him to go up there—so soon . . .

LARKIN: More than I've got.

MORGAN (*Still looking up at the bridge, the one thing he comprehends*): My son—he has a lot of guts, doesn't he?

LARKIN (*Slowly*): He sure—does, Mr. Morgan.

MORGAN (*Still looking up, his pride somehow fulfilled*): Yes—he sure does. (*Both men look to the bridge.*)

The Curtain Falls



Book condensation in the author's own words—

a swift-moving story of quick tempers and fast basketball

Welcome to Castlemont!

Absorbed in the study of his classroom schedule, Vard Ransom did not hear footsteps on the snow-covered walk that led to the gym. A voice said, "Tired, frosh?"

Startled, Vard glanced up. "Not particularly." He grinned at the boy who stood before him.

"Not too tired to stand up?"

"No, of course not." A puzzled frown gathered on Vard's forehead.

"Then let's see how fast you can get on your feet." The speaker wore a heavy Mackinaw which, partly opened, revealed a purple sweater and a white block C. He was a big youth, big in the shoulders and big in the chest, and there was a truculent edge to his words. Vard's gray eyes were suddenly chilly with insolence.

"Why should I?"

"Because you're sitting on the varsity bench, frosh. Hasn't anyone taught you to read?" He pointed abruptly to the side of the granite slab that formed the

bench, and Vard, bending over, saw for the first time the inscription chiseled there. The bench, he discovered, was reserved for men who wore the block C.

Vard stood up, unhurriedly. Erect, he was an inch taller than the varsity man, but in contrast to the other's bulk he looked almost frail. The look was deceptive. He was bony and angular, despite his 170 pounds, but his hands were big and capable. Good hands for basketball or football. His eyes were no longer insolent, but there was cool assurance in them.

"Sorry," he said evenly. "This is my first day on the campus. For your information, though, I'm not a freshman. I'm a transfer from North Pacific."

The dark-haired wearer of the C grunted. "Oh, the wild West! Well, cowboy, we have traditions here and we like to have them observed. I advise you to learn them quick."

"Thank you so much," Vard said, "for your kindness." The sarcasm was unmistakable.

"A wise apple! What's your name, mister?"

"It's Ransom. Sorry I don't have my card with me."

"A wise apple just crying to be peeled, aren't you?" the varsity man demanded, now openly hostile.

For an instant Vard was tempted to retreat. Not that he was afraid. But common sense told him to avoid this quarrel. He had been at Castlemont less than 24 hours and this was no way to begin.

Then he felt the blood tingling in his temples and the smoldering spark of resentment at being shoved around broke into flame.

"You think you're sharp enough to do the peeling?" he asked.

"Break it up, boys, break it up."

It was an unexpected voice, gay and chiding, and both turned in surprise to find a girl regarding them with amusement. Even in her heavy polo coat, she was slender. Her short blonde hair was wind-tousled and her eyes, blue and wide-set above her upturned nose, were friendly.

"You two look like a couple of gamecocks," the girl went on. "It's too cold for arguments, Curt; let's walk. Or



PIVOT MAN

By DICK FRIENDLICH

Illustrated by George Meyerriecks



haven't you been introduced?" Her eyes went to Vard. "You're new, aren't you?"

"New, and plenty fresh," Curt growled. "A tough customer from the West."

"He doesn't look tough to me," the girl said.

"Do you have to butt in, Phil?" Curt demanded acidly.

"Don't be stuffy," she said lightly. "You'll be late for practice if you don't hurry."

The dark youth muttered something unintelligible. He moved off, but before he passed through the doorway of the red-bricked gym he threw Vard a scowling look.

The girl laughed. "Curt does take himself seriously sometimes. As for you, Mister—"

"Ransom, Vardaman Ransom."

"I'm Phyllis Walker. I'm sorry you couldn't have had a pleasanter welcome to Castlemont, but then you mustn't mind Curt Robinett. He's senior-class president and a block C man. When you get to know him, he's not a bad fellow."

"I hope I never get to know him," Vard said flatly. Then: "Does he play basketball?"

"He's our first-string center and very good too. Why?"

The blood began to tingle anew in his temples. "I play basketball too. I've been waiting here for Coach Fields to come along."

"You mean you want to try out for the varsity? Seems a little late to start," Phyllis said thoughtfully. "This is early January and the team's already played half a dozen games. You weren't thinking of the freshman team?"

"No, I'm a sophomore. I played frosh ball at North Pacific two years ago. I've been out of school for the last year, but I've been doing some running and I think I could make a fair showing."

"Pretty good, are you?" She was smiling and the question had no sting.

"Better than fair, I think," he said frankly, and then wondered if that sounded too cocky. But the girl did not laugh and he went on. "I had a basketball scholarship at North Pacific, and that's ten times as big as this school."

"You'll find a lot of things different here. Castlemont is small enough to let you know everyone on the campus."

"I hope they're all as nice as you," Vard had not meant to be impulsive, but Phyllis twinkled.

"Neat but not gaudy, that speech. I—oh, there goes Cappy Fields into the gym. Good luck, Vard."

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The door of Cappy's office was open and Vard walked in boldly. Behind a battered desk sat a short, stocky man with a leathery face, gray hair brushed in a stiff pompadour, and a wide, humorous mouth.

"My name is Vard Ransom," he said. "I've transferred as a sophomore from North Pacific. I played freshman basketball there two seasons ago. I'd like to try out here." He was aware that the coach's steady gaze, at first inquiring, had become one of quick appraisal. There was a moment's silence.

"Ordinarily," Cappy said, "I'd be overjoyed at the sight of a six-footer. But our season's been under way for more than a month. You can appreciate the problem that creates?"

Vard shifted impatiently. Didn't Fields realize that he wasn't a novice?

"You see," Cappy went on, "I have no assistants, so I have to work with a small squad. It happens that this season my varsity is pretty much a veteran outfit, seniors and juniors who have been playing together for two years. Without knowing anything about your ability, Ransom, I'd say your chances of doing anything but warm the bench were thin."

Vard felt the color rising in his cheeks. Why, the North Pacific frosh could probably beat the Castlemont varsity, and here was a coach who didn't want to let him on the floor!

"All I'm asking is a chance," he said. "If I get in your way, drop me from the squad. But it doesn't seem fair to turn a man down without a trial." He stressed the word "fair."

The coach stared at him thoughtfully, and suddenly Vard wished he had not used the word. Then, just as suddenly, Cappy's lips broke into a dry smile.

"You win, Ransom; it doesn't sound fair," He scribbled on a printed form, then handed it across the desk. "Give this to Sarge Messner in the equipment room downstairs. He'll fix you up with shoes, sweat suit, and the rest of it. We practice in the field house, just behind this gym. Be on the floor at four sharp tomorrow."

Robinett Gets in the Way

The light slap-slap of Vard's rubber-soled shoes was the only sound in the deserted field house. Vard bounced the ball lazily to the side line, whirled, and flipped a leaping one-hand shot at the basket. A door opened and a sweat-suited group came onto the court, talking and laughing. The leader, a sturdily built, yellow-haired youth, broke into a run toward the nearest backboard and called for a pass.

There was something familiar about the blond's features, although Vard was sure he had never seen him before. Curt Robinett's dark head was in the group

too. Cappy Fields appeared in the wake of another knot of players. The coach beckoned to Vard.

"Fellows, we have a new man with us today. This is Vard Ransom, just transferred here from the Coast. I know you'll all help him and maybe he can help us."

Vard found a battery of eyes focused on him.

"I won't introduce you to everyone," the coach went on. "You'll get acquainted soon enough by yourself. Better meet our captain, though—Gordon Merrillat."

A tall, freckled lad with wide shoulders and sharp features came up to shake hands. Fields moved off down the court. Vard could see Curt Robinett regarding him stonily, and then the chunky blond, whose face had seemed familiar, approached. His blue eyes held a glint of amusement.

"My name's Roy Walker. I've heard about you, Ransom."

Vard was surprised for only a moment. His puzzled feeling of recognition was explained by Roy's unmistakable resemblance to Phyllis. Someone behind Walker said in a low tone, "So THAT's the blushing violet who's going to run somebody off the varsity!"

Anger and embarrassment flooded Vard's cheeks with crimson.

The amusement went out of Walker's eyes, and he flung a quick look over his shoulder at the unidentified speaker.

"Don't mind him," he said. "He's worried because he couldn't buy a field goal in our last game. We could use someone who can hit his hat."

Despite Walker's bantering tone, Vard sensed that with some of the squad, at least, he had already been tabbed as a fathead.

In the group behind Walker, someone gave a low whistle. Then Cappy's voice rang out from the far end of the court.

"Warm-up drill!"

The gathering melted away. Vard saw Cappy striding in his direction.

"You and I are going to have a little private exhibition, Ransom." The coach led the way to the opposite end of the court.

"I want to see how you handle yourself. There's an imaginary guard on you. Dribble, shoot, and follow in, but don't take any long shots. Otherwise, you're on your own."

Vard peeled out of his sweat suit, feeling a little self-conscious, on this strange court, about pretending to elude a man who wasn't there. But as he warmed up and the perspiration began to flow, he forgot about that. Dribble, fake, stop, drive, lay it in, rebound. Circle back, shoot, rebound, recover once more.

It went that way in silence for fully



Vard Ransom

five minutes. Then Cappy called a halt.

"You've had good coaching on fundamentals," he commented. "Tell me, do you always shoot one-handed?"

Vard nodded. "My high-school coach taught us that way. He used to say it's just as accurate as a two-hand shot and harder to guard."

"There are two sides to that argument," Cappy said dryly. "We teach the two-hand set shot. But I never try to change a player's natural style. As long as the ball goes through that iron ring, he can bounce it off his nose for all of me. Now I'd like to try you with live opposition."

Vard watched Cappy setting up a shooting exercise for the squad. Then the coach came back up the court accompanied by a lanky lad with long, thin legs and bony shoulders.

"This is Johnny Majors, one of our sophomores," Cappy made the introduction. "He'll be your guard. See if you can get past him for a shot. No long ones though."

It was really too easy. Majors was in deadly earnest, but he was clumsy and inexperienced. He could be faked out of position to either side with just a feint of the shoulder. Vard spun him with a quick move, then cut back around him, and pounded into the hole for the lay-in.

He dribbled hard, with every ounce of energy. Johnny Whalen, years before a member of the famed Kansas Marvels, had once told him: "You can't afford to take it easy. When you see the lane to the bucket open up, drive right through. Never mind the guard if you've got the right of way. If he crosses into your path, give him the shoulder and keep on going. The foul will be on him, not you. And after he gets knocked down a couple of times,

he won't be so eager to crowd you. And it's perfectly legal."

Vard looked into Majors' strained face. The substitute's right hand was extended in the orthodox guarding maneuver, but one quick glance told Vard that the guard's feet were planted too far apart for good balance. A fake start to the right brought Johnny lunging in that direction. Vard, stretching off his pivot foot, snapped back suddenly and cut to the other side. Majors could not recover in time, and Vard rolled past him effortlessly.

Then Cappy said gently: "That'll do, fellows. Majors, what have I told you about standing flat-footed? Stay on the balls of your feet so you can go to either side. Both of you take a breather."

Vard and Johnny slid quietly onto the bench and watched. Under the farther basket, Cappy was giving instructions to two teams. This was Vard's first look at the Castlemont varsity in action. He picked out the regulars—deep-chested Robinett in the free-throw lane at center, Roy Walker at one guard, Merrilat on the other side. The forwards, Majors told him, were Vince Mahoney, a supple six-footer, and Scooter Peck, a handsome youth with a sleepy, almost bored, expression that Vard soon learned was rank deception. Peck was agile as a cat.

One of the five, Vard told himself, was going to move over to make room for him. He hoped it would be Robinett.

The play on which the varsity was being tested was a double screen worked from near the side line about twenty feet out from the basket. Against a man-for-man defense, it was designed to give the guard a chance to drive in for a short shot by setting up a pick-off on two defending men.

Finally, the coach barked, "All right, hold it up." He turned frowning toward the bench and let his gaze rove over the remaining substitutes. "Ransom!"

Vard came to his feet. The player Vard was replacing walked to the side lines. Cappy tossed the ball to the other guard at mid-court, the latter snapped it across to Vard, and the second string moved up to attack.

The ball moved "round the horn"—Vard to the guard, in to the center on the pivot post, out again, down to the forward who broke out of the corner, was immediately checked by Walker, and passed out to Vard again. The seconds were maneuvering for position with care, waiting to set up the play.

Vard took the ball, crouched, and faked a cut to his left but kept his pivot foot firm. In front of him, the sleepy-looking Peck moved with him, graceful and sure-footed. But behind him, Vard could see the offensive center and the forward on his side come out

together, approaching Peck, with Robinett and Merrilat, the defenders, following. The screen on Scooter was established and Vard suddenly broke to the inside around him. Peck was pinched off by the center, who had taken up a spot just a yard behind him, and the forward was between Merrilat and the core of the play.

It was up to Robinett now to abandon his man and drop back to check the dribbler. Curt was just a fraction of a second slow in making the switch and Vard was abreast of him too soon. The center threw an arm wildly in front of him and there was a resounding slap as his hand struck Vard's wrist. The latter checked his momentum, found himself covered by Walker, coming in from the side, and was forced to pivot and pass out to the back line. Cappy's whistle sounded shrilly.

"Curt, you're following that center out too far. You've always got to stay between the guard and the basket. Try to keep that in your head. And another thing—watch those hacking fouls. If he gets past you, too bad, but don't climb all over him."

Walking back to position, Vard wondered if Robinett had been deliberately rough. Well, if that's the way Robinett wanted it, that's the way he'd get it.

After that it went a little better for the varsity, although the second stringers made the play work twice as Robinett switched too slowly for Cappy's approval. Finally, the coach announced they could try it once more and call it a day.

Vard was the starter and this time he varied his own maneuver a trifle. He moved laterally almost to the middle of the court before making his cut, then turned sharply and drove straight up the free-throw alley.

Robinett, looking for a sharper angle on the cut by the dribbler, had not drifted back to the inside quite far enough. For an instant Vard had an unobstructed lane to the basket. Then the center leaped into his path.

Afterward, Vard wondered if he might have avoided the collision by simply stopping in his tracks. But as Robinett blocked his legal right of way, he instinctively put on extra steam. Dribbling with his right hand and driving with every muscle, he crashed squarely into the center, felt the impact of his crooked left elbow and hunched shoulder in the latter's chest, and went sprawling on over him as they both went down.

Vard rose, shaken, and was aware of uproar behind him. Robinett lay writhing on the floor, both hands clutching his chest as teammates bent over him anxiously. Then Bones Elton, the team doctor, was shouldering his way through the group to kneel by the fallen player.

Suddenly Vard felt himself grasped roughly by the arm and spun around.

"You did that on purpose!" Merrilatt lunged at him in a choked voice. "You deliberately played it dirty, Ransom!"

Surprised by the captain's violence, Vard stepped back a pace. Then his own temper boiled and hot words leaped to his tongue, only to be shut off by the sharp voice of the coach.

"Drop it, Gordon!" There was no mistaking the command in Cappy's tone.

But Merrilatt did not subside immediately. "We don't need that kind of player here!"

"I'll be the judge of whom we need," Cappy snapped. "You know the rules about crossing the dribbler's path and so does Curt." His voice softened. "Now go in and get your shower and forget it. Curt's only shaken up."

Merrilatt gnawed at his lower lip and walked off the court.

Vard, still red-faced, said: "Thanks, coach. I'm glad you don't think I'd try to cripple anyone."

"I wouldn't accuse a man of that without conclusive evidence," Cappy said. "You were within the rules."

"I couldn't stop in time," Vard said, and wondered if this were true. Johnny Whalen's advice came back to him—don't give them an inch, kid, or they'll bluff you out. Play it clean, play it fair, play it hard, and play to win. *I played it fair*, he thought, *it was Robinett's fault*.

Elton had helped the center to his feet. Vard approached and held out his hand. "I'm really sorry, Robinett. I guess I was going too fast."

Curt gave no sign of having heard him. There was a moment's strained silence before Elton, the trainer, spoke.

"It's just a bruise, Cappy. Heat will fix it up in a week or so."

"A week?" the coach demanded sharply. "You mean he'll miss both the Wendover and the Mercer games?"

A low murmur ran through the players. Vard was aware of unfriendly eyes. He felt a surge of helpless resentment at this wholesale condemnation.

[In the following weeks Vard participated in three games. In the first, he was sent in as a substitute in the final minutes of play with the score a tie; in taking an unnecessary chance he committed a personal foul which resulted in Castlemont's losing the game. In the second game when Castlemont racked up a substantial lead, Curt Robinett tried to make Vard's playing look poor by purposely throwing him bad passes. In the third game when Castlemont was trailing badly, Vard made a hero of himself with a series of fancy shots that won the game. Although Cappy complimented Vard on his shooting, he

was only mildly enthusiastic, pointing out that Vard ignored chances to pass the ball to his teammates for sure-fire set-up shots.

Although most of his teammates continued to cold-shoulder him, Vard found a real friend in his roommate, Benny. Vard returned to his room one day shortly before the game with St. Charles, Castlemont's chief rival, to find Benny planning to attend a pregame rally at St. Charles, disguised as a St. Charles frosh. Benny had a wild scheme for recovering a bell which St. Charles long ago stole from the Castlemont chapel, a theft that had inspired many destructive raids on the St. Charles campus. The evening of the St. Charles rally, Vard learned that these raids had prompted the Dean to announce that any Castlemont students caught participating in such an episode would be expelled.

Deciding he must dissuade Benny from his foolhardy mission, Vard took a bus to the St. Charles campus. He arrived in the nick of time, but before he could drag Benny away, Vard was spotted by a St. Charles letterman who was the guardian of The Bell. In order to make their getaway, Benny tossed a



Curt Robinett

tear-gas bomb which he planned to use to recover the bell. The crowd dispersed and Vard and Benny escaped without their identities being discovered, although Vard was uneasy lest some St. Charles students recognize him at the game.]

Vard Renews an Acquaintance

The chartered bus deposited the Castlemont Wildcats in front of the St. Charles field house. As they descended, a cluster of St. Charles students passed and one of them shouted: "Oh, you Pussycats! You're going to get it tonight!"

The mounting tenseness apparent among his teammates had surprised Vard. He had known, of course, that St. Charles was the traditional rival. But just how much beating St. Charles

mattered, he had not realized before tonight's long, jolting ride in the bus. Vard, sitting next to Johnny Majors in the rear of the bus, commented on the absence of the usual good-natured chatter. Johnny nodded soberly.

"It's been a long time since we've beaten this bunch. I think most of us would rather lick St. Charles than win the Conference championship, if we had to choose between the two."

As they dressed, Cappy made an effort to ease the tension. "All right, men," Cappy said, his voice casual. "You all know what you're supposed to do. It's just another basketball game, after all. Let's go out and win it."

As they ran onto the court, a section of the stands rose to greet them with a sharp burst of cheering that was at once drowned by a cascade of sound from the rest of the huge field house. From the other side, the Saints, brilliant in scarlet jerseys, had made their appearance and yell leaders were calling for six big ones for the St. Charles varsity. They got them, in volume that seemed to shake the windows.

Castlemont's squad split into two lines for its warm-up shooting drill at the far end of the court. Jogging down to the end of the file, Vard saw something that sent his heart into his mouth and almost stopped him in his tracks.

Under the St. Charles basket, a broad-shouldered figure in a scarlet upper was leaping up for a shot. Even at that distance there was no mistaking the strong jaw line, the mop of black hair, and, above all, the arrogant, cocksure set of the head. It was the guardian of The Bell.

Vard tapped Marv Black on the arm. "Who's their number three?" he asked, with a quick glance over his shoulder. Black turned to let his eyes rove over the St. Charles array.

"Oh, him? That's Vic Heath, their captain. A real hard-nosed character. What made you ask?"

"Oh, nothing. He just looked like a big wheel. I was curious."

"He's good, all right, and he knows it," Black said, adding, with a wistful note, "I wish he were on our side tonight."

I just wish one of us were someplace else, Vard thought.

Then Cappy was calling the Wildcats together and Merrilatt went out to the middle of the floor to meet with the two officials and shake hands with Heath. The regulars huddled in a tight group, with Cappy in the middle; the referee's whistle sounded shrilly. Robinett, wiping his hands on his jersey, faced off in the center circle against Devoto, the tall St. Charles pivot man. Again the whistle and up went the ball. The game was on.

Vard fastened his attention on Heath,

For all his bulk, the Saints' captain was quick as a cat, Vard saw, as he covered Scooter Peck in the home team's man-to-man defense. Heath had a bagful of sly tricks too. As Peck cut in front of him from the corner, Vard saw the Saint's hand furtively give Scooter a nudge in the small of the back.

It was fast, and out of the officials' range of vision. Just enough to throw Peck off balance, and the bounce pass from Merrillat went spinning uselessly into the first row of spectators. Scooter, scowling angrily, looked appealingly at the referee, then said something out of the corner of his mouth to Heath. The latter gave him an impudent grin.

St. Charles moved with a rush and Heath was suddenly driving around the corner for an under-and-up shot along the back line of the court. Peck tried to stay with him, but Heath seemed almost to brush the Scooter aside. As Heath came up to the bucket for the lay-in, Peck clutched for the ball. Heath spun it off the tip of his right hand and his free left hand jerked up quickly to strike Peck's arm with an audible slap.

Vard half rose from the bench in protest. Heath had tried to make it look as though Scooter had hacked him, and had succeeded, for the referee was signaling the foul. *An actor, this Vic Heath*, Vard growled to himself. An actor and a roughneck. He'd seen Heath's style before.

Now Heath was stepping confidently to the free-throw line. He made the shot good and it was three to nothing before the clock above the scoreboard had ticked off the first minute.

The Wildcats came down court slowly. Cappy had planned on a ball-control offense if his men could make it stick; St. Charles was out to make its opponents run. Castlemont snapped the ball around the outside with precise movements, changing its patterns constantly to set up the good shot.

But the Saints were tough and smart. Not only Heath, Vard discovered, but Chalmers, the other guard, slim and supple, and the compactly built forwards, O'Halloran and Kane too. They were ball hawks, all of them, alert and fast. And rough too, he decided, watching Chalmers shoulder Roy Walker aside on a rush for a loose ball. Roy hit the boards with a crash and was up, eyes blazing and fists clenched. But only for a second—he relaxed at once.

The pace stepped up, and the personal fouls began to pile up on both sides. Castlemont was playing excellently, cutting inside and outside the free-throw alley as Cappy's carefully plotted screen plays set up perfect shots.

But St. Charles's sturdy driving attack was just as effective.

Castlemont matched its foe basket

for basket through the first five minutes until O'Halloran made a spectacular twisting jump shot to break a nine-to-nine deadlock. Then steadily the Saints began to climb.

For Vard, however, there was but one man on the floor—Vic Heath. He kept his attention riveted on the big guard, anger in him building up minute by minute. He watched Heath surreptitiously grab Peck's jersey, lean against him, jab an elbow into his ribs. The officials saw none of this; Heath was careful to attempt his tricks only when he knew he was out of the line of play.

It had an obvious effect on Peck. The slender Wildcat forward looked worried and uncertain; twice his hesitancy in breaking for the basket caused passes to go astray. Vard fumed in frustration. He knew how to handle fellows like Heath, how to battle them with their own weapons.

During a time out, Merrillat approached the two officials and appeared to be complaining. They did not seem impressed. He was undoubtedly pro-

About the Author . . .

Dick Friendlich was born in San Francisco, where he attended elementary and high school. He worked for the Associated Press for two years before entering Stanford University, and in 1933 received a degree in Social Sciences. The following year was spent in New York City, where he worked for *The New York Times* as an advertising solicitor. In 1935 he returned to his home town and joined the staff of the *San Francisco Chronicle* as a sports writer. With time out for three years in the Army, he has covered basketball, boxing, and football regularly. *Pleat Man*, his first book-length basketball story, was followed by *Warrior Forward*, another story of college basketball.

testing Heath's tactics, Vard thought. But it was unlikely that the referees would admit they were missing any infraction of the rules.

Carl Van Nuys, sitting next to Vard, nudged him. "Cappy wants you."

Vard had been so absorbed in watching Heath that it took a moment for Van Nuys' words to sink in. He was going in there! The fear that Heath might recognize him flared sharply, vanished at once. His lips were set in a thin, hard line and his gray eyes glinted in anticipation. He was going to get a crack at Heath.

Cappy had a harried frown, but his voice was as placid as always.

"Go in for Peck."

"What do I do about Heath?" Vard asked challengingly.

Cappy seemed puzzled. "What do you mean?"

"Do I let him get away with everything he's been trying so far?"

Cappy's eyebrows raised. "You'll play him as you'd play anyone else." The coach's tone was even. "According to the rules."

Vard knew Cappy had meant that as an order. Let the opposition do what it would—Castlemont would play it clean.

He reported as Mahoney, fouled by Chalmers, stepped to the free-throw line. The massed St. Charles rooters were booing the official decision on the play and the booing grew in volume with each passing second. Vard gave Peck a heartening slap on the back and took his place on the lane next to the Saints' center, Devoto. Mahoney bounced the ball nervously in front of him as the sound of the jeers blotted out everything else.

He doesn't have to shoot until they quiet down, Vard thought. *It's in the rules. He can ask the referee to make them stop or call a technical foul against the home team.*

But Vince, obviously unsettled, did not wait. He bent his knees and sent the ball up with a jerk of his wrists. It struck slightly to one side of the rim and rolled off into a scramble of arms from which the Saints' Devoto emerged in possession.

Heath was Vard's man on defense; he picked him up as he crossed the center line. Devoto dribbled leisurely past the stripe, flung the ball over to Heath, and moved down court. The Saints' captain cut to the inside and came to a stop as Vard, right arm outstretched, hovered in front of him.

Heath pivoted, feinted a pass. Then suddenly he stepped back on his pivot foot and relaxed, bringing the action to a complete halt.

Vard realized that his opponent was staring with dawning recognition.

"Well if it isn't the bombardier!" Heath exclaimed loudly. "Fancy meeting you here."

Flushing in confusion, Vard stepped back and Heath, with a quick under-hand flip, bounced the ball past him and broke for the basket. Vard was caught flat-footed. As he belatedly recovered and attempted to stay with Heath, the forward from the other side came across to form a perfect screen. Heath, taking the return pass, raced behind his teammate to go in free for an easy under-and-up shot.

Merrillat instantly made a request for a time out.

"If you're going to cover Heath," the captain told Vard with unconcealed irritation, "you'll have to stay alive, Ramsom. He can go either way and you have to crowd him every second."

Angry with himself for being tricked, Vard was on the verge of snapping back that he knew what he was up against

Instead he said, "Sorry I let him get away."

Merrillat nodded, then said, his tone more conciliatory: "Don't let Heath bother you with his chatter—he likes to jockey his man. What was he saying to you out there?"

"I didn't even hear him," Vard replied untruthfully. He saw Robinett regarding him quizzically, and he stared back defiantly.

Play resumed and Merrillat brought the ball down court. Vard took the pass in the left-hand corner and Heath made a swipe at it. "Bombs away, Ransom," the Saint hissed at him and jostled his arm as Vard turned his back. He hooked a pass high over Heath's head across court to Walker and cut past the Saints' captain, who turned and went with him. He felt a quick shove as he went by—Heath's hand on his hip, ever so deftly.

Walker tried the shot and Vard went up for the rebound. He got both hands on the ball, clung to it fiercely as someone, wrenching at it, spun him around off balance and sent him sprawling to all fours. He could hear a roar of laughter as he clambered to his feet, saw the official signaling a jump ball at the foul circle. The man who had twirled him around was Heath, and the impudent grin was still on his face as he squared off opposite Vard for the tip.

"Like it here, sonny?" Heath inquired with mock concern. "Let us know when you're coming again, and we'll wear gas masks."

Vard stifled the urge to answer back. He did not like Heath's way of playing basketball, but if the Saint was sore about the raiding episode, Vard conceded his right.

Heath outjumped him, slapping the ball to O'Halloran. Then he went down the side line, Vard at his shoulder. The Saint tried to shake him off with a quick halt and feint, then cutting to the inside, but Vard stayed with him. Vard played him half a step to the left as Heath, right hand bouncing the ball low, left arm crooked high, attempted to go around him near the corner. He held his ground and the Saint banged into him. It was an obvious foul on the dribbler and it was promptly called by the official.

Heath turned a reproachful look on the referee and the St. Charles rooters, taking their cue from the captain's air of innocence, again set up a clamor of disapproval. Vard walked slowly down to the Saints' basket. The jeering intensified as he stepped to the foul line. He stood motionless for a moment, then bent down and, carefully placing the ball on the line, stepped back with his hands on his hips.

"I can't shoot with all that noise, Mr. Referee," he said. "Would you please ask them to stop?"

A corner of the official's mouth twitched, but he did not smile as he looked at Heath inquiringly.

"Captain," he said evenly, "will you see if the cheerleaders can quiet your rooters? Their conduct is the responsibility of the home team, under the rules. I will be forced to call a technical foul against St. Charles if the booing continues."

Heath's lips parted as though he were about to say something. But apparently he thought better of it, for he turned to face the rooting section and gestured with hands upraised for them to stop. The jeering dropped away gradually to an angry hum.

"Thank you, captain," Vard said, with exaggerated politeness, and with an easy, graceful motion dropped an underhand shot for the point. *That ought to hold them for a while*, he thought.

It did not hold Heath. The next few minutes Vard remembered only as a personal dogfight between himself and the Saints' captain. Heath was all over him when he had the ball, all elbows and hips as Vard tried to guard him. Vard struggled to keep his temper under control, remembering Cappy's firm instructions.

Twice he eluded the Saint for good shots. One was a quick push from the corner that brought delighted yelps from the small knot of Wildcat rooters. On the other, he fooled Heath with a feint of his head just long enough to get half a step on him and run him into Robinett for a perfect block. Vard went past the basket for an overhead hook shot and could not resist a look of triumph at the thwarted Heath. Now it was Heath's turn to worry. The Wildcats had steadied; they were handling the ball with snap and certainty, making few errors in spite of St. Charles' pressing defense.

Vard felt a surge of exultation. They had the Saints' number now; he knew it. Watching Heath in front of him, he was aware, out of the corner of his eye, that on the other side Chalmers was setting himself for a shot. Vince Mahoney timed his own leap perfectly; his hand batted down the ball almost as it left Chalmers' fingers, and it bounced loose in the middle of the court.

Vard was first to reach it. He took control of it on the dead run and raced for the basket, conscious of a pursuer at his shoulder. Even as he scooped up the ball he decided he would go all the way for the shot rather than stop and pass back.

He came up on the right side, leaping off his left foot and laying the ball up against the backboard at the tips of his fingers. Then something crashed into his back with stunning force, he went hurtling, arms and legs asprawl, into the first row of spectators. They

tried hastily to get out of his path and succeeded only partially. Vard's head struck one youth's shoulder with a force that made his ears buzz, and his legs banged against the chest of another youth.

For an instant he lay there dazed. Then as he tried to untangle his legs from the bleacher seats, someone put a hand under his arm and guided him to his feet.



Phyllis Walker

The Saints' captain said, with an anxious note in his voice: "Not hurt, are you? I'm sorry I ran into you that hard. It was an accident."

An accident! Rage engulfed Vard. Heath had smashed into him purposely, not caring whether he might be injured or not. Angrily he wrenched his arms loose from the other's grasp, doubled his fist, and drew it back.

Instantly, Merrillat and Walker were lunging at him from either side, their arms across his chest pinning his arms to his sides.

"Don't be a fool," Walker grated as Vard struggled to shake them off. "Want to get tossed out of the game?"

Vard relaxed suddenly. "I'm sorry," he muttered to his teammates, who loosed their grasp. He had been foolish to let his hot blood get the better of him. He was playing right into Heath's hands by losing his head.

"You shoot one, number eight," the referee said coolly. "The foul's on you, number three."

There was a hum from the stands, but no jeering as Vard once more stepped to the free-throw line. He was trembling with anger. One shot only; that meant his field goal attempt had been good in spite of Heath's shove.

His shot hit the back of the rim and bounced out. Vard followed in, but was effectively blocked off by Heath, who rode him out on his hip as he came down with the ball. Vard clawed at him viciously in an effort to reach the ball, but his hand struck Heath's arm with an audible slap.

Again the whistle sounded. "Foul on number eight; you shoot, three."

As he walked toward the other basket, Vard's anger mounted again, this time against himself. He had no business guarding a man in that manner; he had committed a careless and unnecessary foul because the man was Heath.

Before he had crossed mid-court, Chet Ecklund came onto the floor and motioned him off. Cappy rose from his seat to meet him at the edge of the court, a frosty glint in his eyes.

"Sit down and cool off, Ransom," he said.

Vard thought resentfully: *O.K., so I lost my temper for a moment. Anyone with gumption would have slugged that Heath long ago. What was I supposed to do, apologize for getting in his way?*

The half ended a moment later, with Castlemont six points behind. Before the Wildcats went back to the court again, Cappy addressed them as a group.

"Men, the going is a little rugged tonight—rougher than it should be. The officials can't see everything, but they're doing the best they can. They'll miss a few. Forget it. Just keep this in mind—the first man on this team who is guilty of rough stuff comes out of the game immediately, and he can turn in his suit Monday."

Vard did not play in the second half. The Saints, with a sudden burst of vigor, increased their six-point lead to 12 in the first few minutes.

Heath was again making a monkey out of Peck. But when Peck came out, it was not Vard who went in but the inexperienced Ecklund, and Chet wasn't equal to the task of stopping Heath.

As the Saints' advantage lengthened, a curious feeling of satisfaction came to Vard. He was almost ashamed of it, but the sting of Cappy's rebuke softened in the knowledge that he could have rescued the Wildcats—perhaps not from ultimate defeat, but surely from this kind of licking. Vard was not at all downcast by the 70 to 48 figures posted on the scoreboard when the game ended. *A character builder, that's what Cappy is*, Vard thought. At North Pacific, a character builder was just another name for a losing coach.

The ride back to Castlemont was a long and silent one, but Vard did not find it unpleasant. His mind was occupied with speculation as to what might have happened had he thrown a punch at Heath. He was in bed and almost asleep before he remembered, with a start, that there was still the matter of Heath's recognizing him.

[Vard was shortly thereafter summoned to the Dean's office. The Dean had received an anonymous letter suggesting Vard knew something about the teargas raid. Vard admitted that he was at the St. Charles rally, but said

he did not throw the bomb. However, he would not tell who did. The Dean placed Vard on probation for the rest of the semester, which meant he could not play in any more games. Vard naturally suspected Vic Heath of writing the anonymous letter, until he was again called to the Dean's office. There he found Heath, who had heard it rumored that he penned the letter and wished it known that he would not employ such an underhanded tactic. Heath also told the Dean that although Vard was at the scene of the raid, he was there to try to prevent it. The Dean took Vard off probation, and he reported jubilantly to Cappy.

As Merv Black had sprained his ankle, Cappy had no reliable second-stringer to substitute for Robinett and groomed Vard for this post. Substituting for Robinett in a game, Vard played so well that Robinett's position was threatened. After an incident in which Robinett needed Vard in a practice session, Cappy warned them that if either of them was responsible for further dissension, that man would be dropped from the squad. But when Robinett provoked him again, Vard lost his temper and he and Robinett came to blows. Believing Cappy would take Robinett's part, Vard quit the team without explaining his side of the story.

Phyllis Walker told Vard she thought he was being unfair to Cappy who needed him for the crucial second game with St. Charles. She revealed that Cappy stood by Vard when Robinett and Merrillat had asked Cappy to kick Vard off the team earlier in the season, threatening to leave the team if Vard did not. Hearing this, Vard swallowed his pride the night before the game and asked Cappy to take him back. He returned to his room to find Merrillat, who had come to apologize. Benny and Phil Walker had been doing some sleuthing and had discovered that Robinett wrote the anonymous letter; upon learning this Merrillat had informed Robinett that he could not play on the team as long as Merrillat was captain.]

Cappy Gets a Ride

Cappy Fields stood in the center of the dressing room, and the murmur of voices fell away to silence. Hunched tensely on the bench before his locker, Vard wiped the perspiration off his hands and fixed his eyes on the coach.

Cappy said: "There's nothing St. Charles can do with a basketball that this team can't do better. Win or lose, Castlemont will be proud of you tonight, but no prouder than I."

With a whoop, they broke for the door. Only those few words before the most important game of them all, Vard thought, as he padded along the cor-

ridor. But if you knew your men, no more was needed.

No questions had been asked upon his return to the squad the day before, no mention of the absent Robinett. Merrillat, he guessed, must have done the explaining, for one by one the other players had come up to him with a quiet, often shy, greeting and a "Glad to see you."

Only Roy Walker had gone beyond that. "Sort of a rough deal, wasn't it?" he remarked cryptically.

"I'd like to forget it," Vard said. Then, with some embarrassment: "I telephoned your sister a couple of times today, but she wasn't in. If you see her—"

"There's a dance at Ramsey Hall tomorrow night after the game. She said to tell you you're invited." He grinned as he turned away.

But that was far from Vard's mind now. They were on the court, and only the game mattered. He saw the burly figure of Vic Heath, and the Saints' captain, his eyes roving the floor as the Wildcats came on, flung up his arm in a quick gesture that was at once a welcome and a challenge.

Cappy had told Vard the day before



Cappy Fields

that he would start at center, and, although he did not say so, Vard knew it was up to him to go the full distance. If he fouled out, it would mean Van Nuys would have to take over, and Carl was not the man for the job. He would not let that happen, not this night.

Now the officials were coming to the middle of the floor and the Wildcat starters huddled quickly around their coach.

"This one's for you, Cappy," Merrillat said in a low voice. Then the huddle dissolved.

Vard stepped into the center circle and shook hands with Devoto, the St. Charles center towering above him. He

crouched for the jump. The whistle sounded.

Devoto controlled the tip easily, batting it into the back court where Heath gathered it in and came dribbling confidently across the center line. Devoto jogged back under the Castlemont basket, shuttling back and forth across the free-throw lane, striving for position as Vard moved with him.

Outside the keyhole, Heath bounced the ball deliberately, then flicked it across court to Chalmers. Chalmers to Kane, Kane high and fast to Devoto—Devoto moving out a step, pivoting, and banking an overhead shot off the backboard over Vard's outstretched arm.

It went through cleanly.

Vard bit his lip in angry self-reproach as he retrieved the ball and snapped it in bounds to Walker. He had let the St. Charles center get away on that maneuver; if he were going to offset Devoto's height advantage, he would have to outguess him.

Castlemont attacked from outside the circle, keeping the ball flying in a weaving pattern of short passes.

Vard took an incoming pass at the top of the key. As he turned to bounce it into the corner, he saw that it was Heath, not Devoto, at his shoulder. A fierce joy surged in him. The best St. Charles could muster was his foe, and that suited him perfectly.

His pass went to Mahoney who shot it to Merrillat. Vard slid off to his right, Heath with him. Merrillat feinted a break, then flung it to the other corner where Peck was trying to lose Devoto. "Didn't think you were going to make it," Heath murmured as he faced Vard. "Heard you were in the doghouse."

Vard turned and cut, stopped and came back as Peck held up the pass. "You heard wrong. I wouldn't have disappointed you for the world."

Vard broke suddenly to the left, felt the sudden, fleeting grasp of Heath's fingers on his wrist.

"Still hand-guarding?" he said grimly, out of the corner of his mouth. "I warned you." Heath grinned, keeping his hand a scant six inches from Vard's arm.

Walker cast off suddenly from twenty-five feet, and Vard charged. The ball spun round the rim and out. There was a defensive cup—Devoto, Chalmers, and Heath—around the Saints' basket as the shot came down. Devoto got one hand on the ball high, but it slipped into Vard's grasp.

On the edge of his vision he saw Mahoney free on the left. The ball had barely touched his hand before he was hooking it over his head to Vince, seemingly without looking. Mahoney pushed it off his chest, and it swished through the strings as the pavilion suddenly exploded.

Let Heath follow him around, Vard thought exultantly as he raced up court. Heath would have a chase he would remember. Someone else could do the shooting tonight; he was going to do the feeding.

He played Devoto carefully. Next time the center swung around for the pivot shot, he found Vard had overshifted on him. With a hand pawing at him, Devoto hurried the shot and it went wild. Vard blocked him on the rebound and Merrillat retrieved as Heath came smashing in on the follow.

Heath's futile charge had carried him out of the court, and he was a split second tardy in recovering. Vard barked for the ball, and Merrillat flung it in bounds quickly. Dribbling low and fast, Vard broke right up the middle of the court. But now Heath was behind him, and St. Charles hastily shifted its defense to meet the threat of four men against three.

Devoto switched from Peck to meet Vard as he neared the circle. Up in the air Vard went, one hand on the ball as if for a push shot, and Devoto leaped with him. At the top of his jump, Vard twisted and wrist-flipped to Peck, running loose, for the unguarded lay-up.

It was not so easy again. Heath did not repeat his mistake, and Vard found the long arms of Devoto sometimes too much for him.

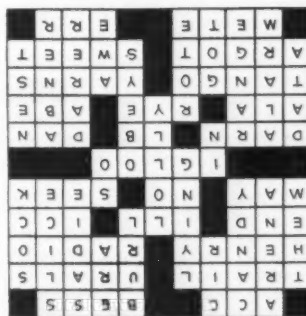
"Keep crowding him, Vard," Mahoney exhorted, slapping him on the shoulder. Vard shot him a grateful glance. Never before had Mahoney called him by his given name.

Heath was not talking to him any more. St. Charles was under pressure, and he had no breath to waste. Once he crowded Vard out of bounds roughly, but there was no foul called. Vard smiled gleefully at Heath as he prepared to put the ball in play again. There was a time, he thought, when he would have flared angrily at such tactics.

As relaxed as though he were in scrimmage, Vard pivoted, feinted around Heath, passed off. The Saints' front line had advanced a little to meet the menace of Castlemont's outside rolling offense, corner to corner and around the circle until the screen was set up, or the quick give-and-go, the cut for the basket, had been established. Merrillat shot and hit; Mahoney slipped in for a close shot; Walker counted from the corner as Vard picked them out with sure, unerring passes.

Absorbed in his own personal duels, Vard was astonished when he heard the gun that signaled the end of the first half. Was it over so soon? Why, he did not even know the score. Almost for the first time, he became aware of the tremendous roaring from the stands. That must mean we're ahead, he thought, and looked up at the score-

Crossword Puzzle Answer



Sure, you can turn this upside down if you want to. But why peek and spoil your fun? Puzzle is on inside back cover of this issue.

board. He was astounded by the figures. Castlemont, 26; St. Charles, 18! Who had scored all those points for the Wildcats? He knew that he himself had not taken a single shot.

Sucking half a lemon to moisten his parched mouth, Vard stretched full length on the rubbing table. Cappy looked down at him.

"How do you feel, Ransom?"

"Never better, coach."

"Good." He laid a hand briefly on Vard's shoulder, and moved on.

Before they went out again, Cappy made his only comment.

"After that first half I can't say anything, except that I hope the second half will be just as good."

There was a worried look on Devoto's face as he set himself for the tip-off. If we can get that first basket now, Vard thought, it will mean a lot. They're pressing; we can break them wide open with a quick bucket.

He could not outjump his opponent, but Mahoney had made his guess where the tip was going, and he was right. Devoto tapped the ball off to the side this time, but Vince was in front of Chalmers, for whom it was intended, plucking it out of the other's fingers.

Vard raced toward the side line as Chalmers crowded Mahoney. He called for the pass, and Vince snapped it across fast. Vard bounced the ball once as though to drive, and Heath came across to pick him up. But one bounce was all. Vard stopped short, rocked back on his pivot foot, and pushed off with his right hand, a high, arching shot aimed at the back of the rim, thirty-five feet away. As it went through the hoop, it seemed to him that the astounded Heath wilted before his eyes.

It was not much of a contest after that. Ten points down, the Saints did not give up but they fought with a doggedness tinged with a sense of doom. And slowly, as the alert Wildcats

forced them into errors, made them throw passes wild, broke around their frantic guarding, the Saints began to crumble.

Vard could see the look of defeat in Heath's eyes as he whirled and cut past him, feeding a sharp, sure pass to Mahoney, crossing over for a spectacular jump shot. He felt a pang of sympathy for the Saints' captain; it was hard to lead a losing cause.

He did not look at the scoreboard but he knew St. Charles was beaten when the Castlemont substitutes appeared. Ecklund was first, and the rafters seemed to rattle as the grinning Peck loped off the court. Then it was Baroni and Majors and, finally, Dave Bernstein for Merrill.

As the captain walked slowly toward the bench, the cheers rose to the roof and cascaded down again.

Vard realized suddenly that he was the only starter left on the floor. He padded wearily down court, moving mechanically through the weave. St. Charles had conceded; Heath was no longer shadowing him, but a new, strange face in a scarlet upper. The new guard wrapped him up and the referee called for a jump ball.

As Vard stepped back, Carl Van Nuys was at his elbow, eyes alight.

"You're through, sonny," he said. "Get out and let a man go to work."

Too tired to attempt a reply, Vard turned toward the bench. There was a deafening roar in his ears. It sounded queerly as though someone were calling his name. "Ransom, Ransom, Ransom!"

He jerked his head up suddenly. They were cheering him. Castlemont was standing and cheering Vard Ransom. He went flame-red and broke into a trot, past Cappy to the vacant seat on the bench, pulling his purple jacket over his head to hide his emotion.

The gun went off a moment later. It was Walker who first got hold of Cappy's leg, while Mahoney took the other. Cappy protested weakly, but there were too many of them, and in a trice, he was riding high above the mass of humanity, borne on the shoulders of his players.

They fought their way with him through the laughing, shouting mob. Vard, his shoulder helping to support the swaying frame of the coach, looked up at Cappy's face. He was trying to smile, but Vard would have sworn there were tears in his eyes.

Finally they let him down outside the dressing room and left him there to face the crowd. As he slipped inside, Vard thought that he would have liked to hear the old duffer talk his way out of this spot.

It would take quite a while, though, and he could not afford to be late. It was a long walk to Ramsey Hall, and he had some talking to do himself.

Letter Contest

Write us. Tell us what your favorite feature in *Literary Cavalcade* is—and why. The writer of the most interesting letter will receive an award of a current best-selling book of his or her choice, inscribed for assembly presentation. Closing day of the letter contest for this issue is January 27. The best letters will be published in the March issue. Address your letter to: Letter Contest, *Literary Cavalcade*, 7 East 12th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

HERE'S the award-winning letter in *Literary Cavalcade's* letter contest for the November, 1950, issue. It was written by Shirley Barnes, a senior at St. James School, Bay City, Michigan. Shirley will receive a best-selling book of her choice, inscribed for assembly presentation. The decision of the judges was not an easy one. Your response was enthusiastic, and the over-all quality of your letters exceptionally fine. Of all the features in the November issue of *Literary Cavalcade*, William O. Douglas' autobiographical sketch, "Of Men and Mountains," was the "walkaway" favorite, and award-winner Shirley Barnes gives you her personal reason for choosing it. Our thanks to all the November contestants. Now let's hear from you on this January issue.

Dear Editor:

My favorite feature in the November issue of *Literary Cavalcade* was the excerpt from Justice Douglas' fascinating autobiography, *Of Men and Mountains*. The reason?

This selection gave me a genuine feeling of pride to be introduced, via the printed page, to two such intrepid and inspiring young men as William Douglas and his companion, Douglas Corpron. I agree with the author that a country needs adventurous men to carry its colors to glory. I am sure that the United States would feel no anxiety whatsoever in trusting her future to the heroes of this tale. The willingness of each young man to assist his friend, despite the peril to himself, would indeed win the country's gratitude. To have such men wholeheartedly and valiantly preserve her lofty ideals is the prayer of every American in these chaotic times.

Mr. Douglas' style strongly appeals to me. It has power, authenticity, almost violent drama. It maintains a consistently crisp narrative atmosphere.

Shirley Barnes

A close runner-up was Janet Burroway of North Phoenix (Arizona) High School. Janet chose the novel condensation, *Knee Pants*, as her favorite feature in the November issue of *Literary Cavalcade*.

It's a sparkling letter. We thought you'd enjoy reading it too.

Dear Editor:

Your November *Cavalcade* was wonderful—full of the kinds of things we like to read, and with enough variety to suit anybody.

Having spent many delightful hours listening to my father's stories of "graduation to longies," however, *Knee Pants* would be the best-seller on my book shelf. Although *Knee Pants* was a book condensation, I had no feeling that the story was incomplete. It's the kind of cut that makes you want to read the book without feeling that it's absolutely necessary in order to get the point. It seems to me perfectly balanced between humor and seriousness, philosophy and utter nonsense. It sparkles like an eye with a twinkle and deep meaning behind it. It's the kind of story that anyone of any age can read and reread, and find some new food for thought each time.

Janet Burroway

And speaking of "food for thought," James Thurber's "The Birds and the Foxes," seems to have given a number of you plenty to think about. Mr. Thurber's satiric fable was another top-ranking feature in the November issue. John Doeringer of Evanston (Ill.) Township High School writes that this moral-tale-for-moderns is the feature of his choice.

Dear Editor:

Particularly timely, it seems to me, is James Thurber's "The Birds and the Foxes," a satire on what is going on today in the nations behind the Iron Curtain. The "liberation" idea is not a new one; it is, on the contrary, centuries old. Julius Caesar practiced "liberation," first on the Gauls and then on the Roman Republic. Napoleon used similar tactics in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. And now the Kremlin is carrying the same policy into action.

More startling, however, is the deception that can be achieved by false labels, such as "liberation," "planned social welfare," and "red herring." When names like these are used either to build up a cause or to smear another, it is most essential for the general public to examine the situation very closely. I believe that "The Birds and the Foxes" is an excellent example to prove the point.

John Doeringer

What Do You Remember?

A Quiz Based on the Contents of This Issue

Chains

Are you an intelligent reader? These questions are based on key references in Nigel Kneale's short short story. Your answers will show whether you *really* understand what you read! In the space opposite each letter write the number of the correct answer.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| ___a. Old Scratch | 1. person who's clumsy aboard ship, |
| ___b. wharf-lubber | more at ease on land |
| ___c. Lampedusa | 2. one of a cargo of slaves |
| ___d. gyve | 3. anchor |
| ___e. blackbird | 4. the devil |
| ___f. yellow jack | 5. ship, in the story |
| | 6. a tropical fever |
| | 7. device for confining the arms or legs |

Choice of Target

In John D. Weaver's short story a proud old hunter and his grandson grope toward a mutual understanding. Do you recall the incidents and details that brought about this happy ending? In the space opposite each letter write the number of the correct answer.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ___a. Little Hig visits his grandparents when his mother takes a job in | |
| 1. Washington | |
| 2. California | |
| 3. Texas | |

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___b. To Glenma, Little Hig's school record suggests a future in | |
| 1. hunting | |
| 2. law | |
| 3. teaching | |
| ___c. When the national park becomes out-of-bounds for hunters, Byrd blames | |
| 1. Mrs. Roosevelt | |
| 2. Link Taylor | |
| 3. the government | |
| ___d. At target practice outside Gus Falk's store, the target is a | |
| 1. squirrel | |
| 2. bottle cap | |
| 3. 50-cent piece | |
| ___e. After the incident in the national park, Byrd feels a sudden sympathy for the cousin who | |
| 1. served time for black-marketing | |
| 2. was fined for speeding | |
| 3. had a near-fatal hunting accident | |

The Long Fall

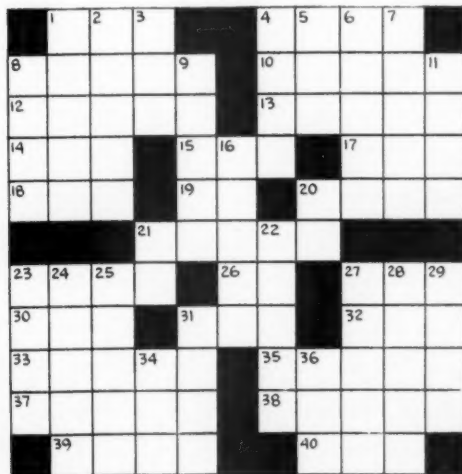
How well do you *visualize* the setting of a play or a story? These questions are based on Carroll V. Howe's one-act play. Check the objects *not* mentioned in the setting.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| ___1. construction-company sign | ___6. desk |
| ___2. transit | ___7. wire reel |
| ___3. leather armchair | ___8. filing cabinet |
| ___4. stove | ___9. metal barrel |
| ___5. drafting table | ___10. coat-rack |

Answers in Teacher Lesson Plan

Books and Authors

● There are 48 words in this puzzle. The words starred with an asterisk (*) are taken from the names of well-known authors or from the titles of well-known books. See how many of these starred words (there are 17) you can get. Allow yourself three points for each starred word and one point for each of the others. If you get all the words you should have a total score of 102. Answers are on page 31, but don't look now. Wait until you have completed the puzzle. Why spoil your fun?



ACROSS

1. Abbrev. for "account."
4. Heroine of folk opera by George Gershwin.
8. "I'll tell you of my troubles on the old Chisholm _____."
10. Mountain range separating Europe from Asia.
12. John _____ said, "I'll die with a hammer in my hand."
13. Wireless telegraph.
14. Finish.
15. Sick.
17. Abbrev. for "Interstate Commerce Commission."
18. Fifth month.
19. "_____ more auction block for me, _____ more, _____ more."
20. Hide and go _____.
21. Eskimo house.
23. Mend a hole in a fabric.
26. Abbrev. for "pound."
27. "Old _____ Tucker."
30. Abbrev. for "Alabama."
31. Cereal plant used for bread.
32. Part of American folklore are stories of young "_____ Lincoln."
33. South American dance rhythm.
35. Many folk tales are called _____.
37. Slang; jargon.
38. "_____ Betsy from Pike."
39. Measure out.
40. Make a mistake.

DOWN

1. Place for athletic contest.
2. "The Big Rock _____ Mountain."
3. Abbrev. for "circumference."
4. Well-known singer of folk tunes is _____ Ives.
5. Historical period of time.
6. Girls chase boys on _____ Hawkins Day.
7. Thin piece cut from a larger whole.
8. Us, you, _____.
9. Resting.
11. Short stocking.
16. "_____—too—dum, _____—too—dum day."
20. Woody Guthrie wrote, "_____ long, it's been good to know you."
21. "Down _____ the Valley."
22. Heeds.
23. Facts.
24. Warning of danger.
25. Now a part of our folklore is the song "Home on the _____."
27. One who dares.
28. Comic strip hero from Dogpatch, U. S. A., L'il _____.
29. Birds' home.
31. Constant repetition, as in learning by _____.
34. "The sow _____ the measles and she died in the spring."
36. Fearful respect.

Chucklebait



UP IN THE STATE OF MAINE

By Earl Wilson

ONE of those superior "summer visitors"—a woman from New York City—was leaving Boothbay Harbor, Maine, at the end of the season. The "summer people" always feel a little superior to the natives, who resent it and silently disapprove of many of their uppity guests.

"Well, we're all going away," said the lofty lady to Captain Al McIntyre, a native. "Whatever do you do after we're gone?"

"Fumigate, ma'am," replied the captain.

I flew up to Portland via Northeast Airlines to investigate this story and to talk to Richard M. Hallet, the author and newspaperman who'd first told it. I was met by Doc Rockwell, the comedian, who lives in Boothbay Harbor. After lunch Doc took me out to see Hallet, author of *The Rolling World* and other books, and his opening remark—typical of Maine hospitality—was, "Sit a bit."

He had a score of stories about the "State-of-Mainer."

The man from Maine often "gets his back up," as in the opening story; he's frequently getting in a hole and getting out of it. Hallet told me that one of the local fellows was trying to impress a woman acquaintance by letting her know that he could tell a lot about weather by looking at cows.

"If the cows are layin' down, it's gonna be clear," he said. "If they're standin' up, look out for rain. They know rain's in the air. They're up and feelin' restless."

His feminine audience of one said to him, "But look at those cows over yonder. Some are standing and some are lying down."

"Eeyeah," said the prophet, pausing for only a second, "that means it may rain and it may not."

Bill Nye and Artemus Ward—Maine Men

Maine's greatest humorist today—and he could well become the nation's greatest—is John Gould, the forty-year-old

editor of the weekly *Lisbon Enterprise*. He gets out his share of the paper and does a sunrise radio program from the window of his farmhouse, which is about a dozen miles from Lewiston, the second largest community in Maine.

He has sufficient precedent. Two of the greatest humorists of the last century, Bill Nye and Artemus Ward, were State-of-Mainers.

Bill Nye, a product of Shirley Mills, Maine, eventually became nationally celebrated and went to Washington, where he met a Senator Shirley.

"Senator Shirley! Why," said Nye, to make conversation. "I was born in a town named Shirley—Shirley Mills."

"Never heard of it," said the senator stiffly.

Nye answered, "Neither did I till I was born there."

Years after he'd left Maine, Nye was told by a caller that they had now put a plaque on his old birthplace.

"You don't mean it!" said Nye. "What does it say?"

"Eight miles to Greenville," said his visitor.

Artemus Ward came from Waterford, having got himself born in 1834, about sixteen years ahead of Bill Nye.

Maine people like to recount that he got so disgusted with the way that editors rearranged his punctuation that he once wrote a book entirely without punctuation.

At the end, however, he added six solid pages of periods, commas, etc., under a caption: "Sprinkle to Suit."

Some Shorties

A tourist inquired of a Maine native, "Where's Cooper's Mills?"

"Don't you move one goldarned inch!" said the native.

* * *

Beans and bean suppers are so common in Maine that the promoters of one of these benefit suppers advertised this way:

BIG SUPPER—NO BEANS

* * *

R. E. Gould (John's uncle), the celebrated "Yankee Storekeeper," maintained that a farmer once sold him some rotten eggs.

Next time he saw the farmer he accused him of selling him bad eggs.

The farmer pretended to be astonished and said, "Well, gosh dang a hen that would lay rotten eggs!"

* * *

Some Maine folks see no reason for concealing prosperity if it ever comes to them. A rather well-to-do woman got trapped into talking to a farmer, and he said to her, "How are your hens? Are they layin'?"

"Yes," she said, "but with us, of course, they don't have to."

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Illustration by Paul Galbone

Ask your teacher to make sure you're in the Cavalcade parade next semester.